



## Reading still poor in fifth of primary schools

BY MATTHEW D'ANCONA, EDUCATION REPORTER

READING standards in primary education have scarcely improved in the past year and one in five schools teaches reading poorly, according to a report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate.

Eighty per cent of primary schools were achieving satisfactory or better standards, including 37 per cent where standards were good, said the report, which is based on inspections at 2,113 schools last year. As in 1990, however, 20 per cent remained "strongly associated with weaknesses in the quality of teaching and in the organisation and management of the classroom."

Most pupils in the eight to 11 age group were found to have been insufficiently extended by the range of reading activities offered to them. Four out of ten of these classes were also restrained by a shortage of books.

The report said that some schools waited too long before identifying children with reading difficulties and were often uncertain about how to help them. In contrast, reading competence among younger readers often reflected strong parental support.

The findings come after a recent government decision to spend £3 million on a reading recovery programme in the inner cities. Kenneth Clarke the education secretary said yesterday in a letter to chairmen of education authorities that the new evidence should give "real cause for concern", taken with the first national tests of seven-year-olds last summer, which showed that 28 per cent could not read alone.

"High quality teaching, effective organisation and management of work in the classroom, and systematic and early assessment of pupils' strengths and weaknesses, are the keys to success," he said. When teaching met these requirements, schools achieved good results, even in the face of social and economic disadvantage.

Evidence that reading standards are declining has triggered a heated debate about teaching methods, with traditionalists defending phonic approaches. Martin Turner, an education psychologist who initiated the debate in 1990, said yesterday that "direct, systematic and explicit instruction" was the most effective classroom approach to teaching reading.

The report found that most teachers used a variety of methods, and that reliance on a single technique was generally unsuccessful. A companion report by the Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, also published yesterday, said that most tutors of primary teachers also favoured a mixed approach.

Greg Brooks, of the National Foundation for Education Research, which recently compiled a survey on children's reading, said that teaching methods were not the key factor in explaining low standards. "Changing social patterns might have something to do with it, or increased watching of TV and video."

● The Universities Funding Council yesterday launched the first exercise to assess research in all higher education institutions in the United Kingdom. Fifty panels of academic experts will assess work in 72 subject groupings, producing ratings for each department on a standard one-to-five scale, which will be used to calculate research allocations for the year 1993-4.

Parents, L&T section, page 4



Mellow yellows: Emma Cooper, a member of the Royal Horticultural Society, preparing a display of daffodils yesterday for the society's early spring flower show at the New Horticultural halls, central London. The show opens today for two days

## Patient's charter Health chiefs miss deadline

BY JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH SERVICES CORRESPONDENT

ONE of the largest regional health authorities has told the health department that it cannot meet the March deadline for clearing its list of patients who have waited more than two years for treatment, as laid down in the patient's charter.

North East Thames had 4,192 patients on its two-year list at the end of January, more than any other region. Of those, 2,160 were waiting for plastic surgery. Despite progress in recent weeks, regional managers have now told health department officials that the authority cannot treat the plastic surgery patients in time and is negotiating a three-month extension to the end of June.

Jane Evans, waiting list manager for North East

Thames, said: "We will achieve the target for the other specialties but with the best will in the world we cannot do it for plastic surgery."

To clear the two-year list by the end of June the region is spending £500,000 from the government's waiting list fund to build a temporary operating theatre at St Andrew's hospital, Billericay, the regional burns and plastic surgery centre. The theatre, which will have a ten-year life, is due to open on May 5. Ms Evans said: "In the short term it will help us clear the two-year list. In the long term we expect to provide a no-waiting plastic surgery service within two years."

Until the new operating theatre opens, plastic surgeons at St Andrew's are doing extra sessions at Orsett hospital, Grays. They have already been told that they have a new deadline to clear the two-year lists. Brian Sommerlad, St Andrew's consultant and honorary secretary of the British Association of Plastic Surgeons, said: "We certainly won't deal with all the cases by April 1. We have argued that rather than make urgent manoeuvres it is better to make long-term plans."

A spokesman for the health department said that no deal had been done with North East Thames. "We have not agreed to deferrals after April 1 for any reason whatever," he said. "Our expectation is that all regions will meet their commitments and there are no exceptions to this."

## Ulster's politicians start talking again

BY EDWARD GORMAN, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

LEADERS of Northern Ireland's four main constitutional political parties yesterday held the first session of talks under the revived Brooke initiative, and agreed to set up a business committee to plan for future meetings.

The leaders, Jim Molyneux and Ian Paisley for the Unionists, John Hume of the SDLP and John Alderdice of the Alliance, met under the chairmanship of Peter Brooke, the Northern Ireland secretary, for a four-hour session at Stormont.

A statement afterwards disclosed that John Major, the prime minister, whose intervention helped pave the way for the meeting, had sent his good wishes, "which all participants noted with appreciation". The parties con-

firmed that they would continue talking until the general election is called and then resume after a post-election meeting of the Anglo-Irish conference.

The new business committee, representing each party delegation and chaired by Brian Mawhinney, the minister of state, is expected to sort out locations for future talks, the independent chairman for strand two, the size of delegations, and other procedural matters.

This phase of the Brooke initiative will amount to very little of substance prior to the election. Its true value will depend on whether, in an inevitably changed post-election political climate, all the participants will honour promptly to the table.

## Life jail for killer of wife

A husband was jailed for life yesterday for murdering his wife after they were taken to a police station's domestic violence unit to try to resolve their difficulties.

Women in the public gallery of the Central Criminal Court applauded as the jury of seven men and five women found Jayantibhai Patel unanimously guilty of murdering his wife Vanda, aged 21. He had stabbed her 12 times.

Patel, aged 34, of Hackney, east London, admitted manslaughter on the grounds of diminished responsibility but denied murder. He had already served a 12-month jail term in 1984 for attacking his first wife.

## Ex-editor jailed


Linzi Drew, aged 33, a former editor of *Penthouse* magazine, was jailed for four months after admitting her part in a mail order business selling pornographic videos. Guildford crown court was told that Drew and her boyfriend, Lindsay Honey, ran the business from their cottage in Stoke D'Abernon, Surrey. Honey, aged 33, was jailed for nine months.

## Aid for Russia

A group seeking to provide aid in the former Soviet republics has set up an office in the City of London. The British Emergency Action in Russia and the Republics hopes to assist emerging self-help organisations and to provide medical aid in areas not covered by government programmes. It is based at 40 Holborn Viaduct, London EC1, phone 071 430 3086, fax 071 430 3448.

## Sentence cut

A ten-year jail sentence on a businessman who made a £1 million blackmail demand against the Cadbury chain by threatening to poison its chocolate cream eggs was cut to eight years yesterday. The Court of Appeal ruled that Robert Telford, aged 43, of Irby in the Marsh, Lincolnshire, deserved a deterrent sentence, but ten years was inappropriate.



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Boxer and programme makers face £1.25m bill over claim that fight was forced on injured man

## McGuigan to pay £450,000 damages for video libel

By PAUL WILKINSON

THE former world featherweight boxing champion Barry McGuigan was yesterday ordered to pay £450,000 damages to his former manager, Barney Eastwood, over remarks made in a television video. With costs, the Irish boxer and the programme's makers, Channel 5 Video, face a bill of more than £1.25 million.

The decision by a jury at Belfast high court marks the nadir of a relationship between the two men which once blossomed publicly as a close personal friendship as well as a successful professional partnership.

After the verdict, Mr Eastwood said: "I am sorry it has come to all this. I have not spoken to McGuigan in six years, but that was not my doing. Naturally I was upset, because here was a wee lad

where we did everything possible for him. He was very, very friendly with the family. We all loved him, and I suppose I was like a father figure to him."

The 25-day hearing ended with the jury rejecting a verdict in favour of the manager's claim that he had been defamed by Mr McGuigan in the video. On the tape the boxer claimed that his manager had made him go ahead with a world title fight six years ago in Las Vegas even though he had a number of injuries.

Mr McGuigan said in the interview recorded for Channel 5 Video that he had "pre-fight injuries" to his right ankle and left ear when he lost his WBA featherweight title to Steve Cruz in June 1986. He said he would never forgive his manager for mak-

ing him go ahead with the contest. Mr Eastwood denied the allegation.

In the interview, the boxer said: "I literally begged him to take me home. He wouldn't take me home. I literally got down on my knees and he made all sorts of excuses. He still made me go through with the fight."

The case centred on Mr McGuigan's ankle injury, apparently suffered while training in America for the third defence of his title. Daniel Johnson, a doctor who treated the injury in Palm Springs, described how he diagnosed a quite severe ankle sprain and that the patient was not able to have a full examination because it was too painful. In my opinion, I expressed that it was out of the question to be in a prize fight in three weeks," he told the court.

Two days after Mr McGuigan sustained the injury, his manager called in a sports injury specialist, Michael Shimansky, the head physician for the Portland basketball team. He treated Mr McGuigan up until the day of the fight and told the court that there had been no complaints from the fighter about his injury. When asked by Robert McCartney, QC, for Mr Eastwood, if it was there any lack of training due to the ankle injury, he replied "No".

In his defence, Mr McGuigan said: "I would indicate to him [Mr Eastwood] how bad things were but he just shrugged his shoulders and turned away."

Mr Eastwood in evidence said: "I believe if anything he was fitter for this fight than he had ever been before."

Guy Juras, one of the match judges, said he saw nothing wrong. "If it [the ankle] had bothered I him feel it would have been showing somewhere." The referee of the fight, Richard Steele, also gave evidence on behalf of Mr Eastwood. "This was one of the best I have ever refereed in my 80 fights. I have a place for it in my top five," he said.

Outside the court Mr McGuigan said: "I am amazed, absolutely amazed. It's an incredible verdict and it's now the subject of an appeal. I have been advised by my lawyers to do that."

Mr Eastwood said that he had been confident of victory as he knew he had truth on his side. "Since Barry McGuigan left me he has had some terrible failures. If I had been managing him that's one fight he would never have taken. Asked if he expected such a big award, he said: "The jury obviously took account of the torture I had gone through."



Victor: Barney Eastwood and his wife leaving Belfast high court after the case yesterday

## Battler who won hearts of the Irish

By SRIKUMAR SEN, BOXING CORRESPONDENT

IN BOXING circles they say there will never another fighter like Barry McGuigan. Those who saw him at the King's Hall, Belfast, know it.

He was a special fighter, who boxed under the management of B. J. Eastwood, Ireland's leading bookmaker, and under the banner of peace, and on the nights of his bouts, he united his country north and south.

One can never forget the strains of "Danny Boy" during the evening in June 1985, at Queens Park Rangers when he won the World Boxing Association featherweight title: his father, Patrick Eastwood, and his corner men behind him, singing. Once the singing stopped,

McGuigan stopped the hearts of his supporters by out-pointing Eusebio Pedraza, of Panama, one of the greatest featherweights.

Britain and Ireland were united in celebration. It seemed that nothing was beyond McGuigan's grasp. The next day, all Belfast turned out to greet him.

"Thank you, Mr Eastwood," Mr McGuigan said as he acknowledged the cheers. Eastwood had steered him through 27 contests and brought him to the pinnacle. On the surface, the two appeared the best of friends, but underneath a rift was developing. McGuigan often saying in private he had not been properly consulted about op-

ponents. Eastwood maintained McGuigan was always fully consulted.

After the defeat of Bernard Taylor, of the United States, and Danilo Cabrera, of the Dominican Republic, Eastwood wanted McGuigan to meet Fernando Sosa, of Argentina. But McGuigan now wanted the "missing" million he believed he should have received.

He sued Eastwood and the matter was settled out of court, with Eastwood paying the fighter £600,000. The split between the two was complete.

wanted to withdraw, being troubled with an ankle injury and an ear drum, things might have been alright in his relationships between himself and Eastwood, if he had not been beaten.

He would have gone on to make further defences, and might not have bothered with reports that the deal with Bob Arum, the American promoter of fights with Cruise, was for \$1,600,000. McGuigan now wanted the "missing" million he believed he should have received.

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Vanguished: Cruz sending McGuigan into the ropes in their Las Vegas clash in June 1986.

The £450,000 awarded to Barney Eastwood is the latest in a long line of large libel awards.

The record payment came in 1989 when a jury decided that Count Nikolai Tolstoy should pay £1.5 million to Lord Aldington over his allegation that the former Tory party deputy chairman sent Cosacks and Yugoslavs to their deaths in 1945.

Other large awards include: 1987, Jeffrey Archer awarded £500,000 against

the *Daily Star*; 1988, Koo Stark awarded £300,000 against *The People*; 1991, Teresa Gorman, MP, awarded £150,000 against Anthony Mudd and Esther Rantzen awarded £250,000 against *The People*; 1992, Sara Keays awarded £105,000 against *New Woman* magazine.

Sonia Sutcliffe, wife of the *Yorkshire Ripper*, won £600,000 against *Private Eye* although this was reduced to £60,000 on appeal.

## 'Perfect' family is set on fire

POLICE were last night trying to unravel the mystery of how a "perfect" family came to suffer horrific burns after apparently being doused with petrol and set alight.

Paul Hooper, aged 44, a clerical worker, suffered 80 per cent burns in the incident at his home in Copner, Hampshire, and was fighting for his life in hospital. His wife Ann, aged 36, is also critically ill. Their sons Terry, aged nine, being treated for neck burns, and Daryl, aged 13, suffering shock, are in the same hospital as their father in Cosham. Their mother was transferred to a specialist burns unit in Bristol.

Robert Holmes, aged 25, a neighbour, said: "I was just sitting in our front room when I saw Terry run past... on fire. I ran outside and grabbed hold of him, putting my arms and body around him to smother the flames."

"Another neighbour, Jim Craig, put an anorak on him and that managed to get the flames out. Then the mother came out. We got hold of the two boys and brought them into our house so they did not see their mother on fire."

"I ran back to the mother and Jim put his coat on her. Then another bloke and I went up to the house. He kicked the door in and we just called to Paul. He came out and sat on the wall. He was so burned... Ann was lying in the road in front of the house, rolled up in Jim's coat."

Mr Holmes, a sales manager, added: "We just don't know what happened at all. They were what everybody describes as a perfect family."

Detective Chief Inspector Nick Imber praised the efforts of Mr Holmes, Mr Craig and Karl Pilka, who kicked down the door of the Hoopers' house during the incident on Sunday night. "If it were not for them, I am convinced the situation would have been much worse," he said.

"We cannot understand why anybody should do this. There is apparently no motive. They were a lovely family who went everywhere and did everything together."

Mr Imber said that Terry Hooper, his neck in flames, was apparently trying to break into someone else's house to get help when he was spotted by Mr Holmes.

## Brent poll tax cut exorcises hard-left ghost

BRENT council in northwest London, once a redoubt of the hard left, took another step on the road to Conservative orthodoxy yesterday by announcing a cut of up to £71 a head in its poll tax.

Ten months after the Tories took control, the borough is to reduce its community charge from £328 a head, set by an administration dominated by Labour, to £271 from April 1, a reduction of 17.5 per cent. Residents who agree to waive their right to pay by ten instalments and make a single lump sum payment will get a further 5 per cent discount, reducing their poll tax bill to £257.

Bob Blackman, the council's Tory leader, said the reduction had been made possible because a tough poll tax

Under a vigorous Tory leadership, that former bastion of extremism, Brent council, is finally shrugging off the 'loony' image which dogged it throughout the 1980s, reports Douglas Brown

collection campaign launched by the Tories had dramatically increased the proportion of poll tax income collected. The council took a four-page supplement in the local paper to publish the names and addresses of poll tax defaulters and hired a firm to phone non-payers at home in the evening to ask for payment.

As a result, by the end of last month the council had collected 90 per cent of its target of £48.4 million, he said. The surcharge to cover

losses caused by non-payment would be cut from £70 to £54.

Checks on the poll tax register had also shown duplication of names and other errors which had led to 10,000 of the nearly 200,000 names being deleted. The remainder would be "vigorously pursued" if they failed to pay.

"We fully intend to use the six-year period given to us by the government to pursue every non-payer in the borough," Mr Blackman said.

"There will be no amnesty for them," Dorman Long, leader of the Labour group, said. "This is diabolical. This figure can only be achieved at the cost of massive cuts in staff and services. It does not look like the action of a prudent or judicious council."

Mr Long said that he was alarmed at the council's reduction of £2 million in provision for bad debts and its decision to raid reserves for £1.2 million to help pay for the cut in poll tax. "It is poppycock to suggest that they are doing better in collecting the poll tax. We know that collection is much worse than last year in spite of the scare tactics and threats they have been using," he said.

The Labour group would call in the district auditor if it found the council's financial position was being jeopardised to cut the poll tax bill.

At the same time, it was disclosed that Leslie Winters, a leading Conservative member of the council, was facing legal action for alleged non-payment of business rates.

Mr Winters, a spokesman for the Tory group when Labour was in power, said that the claim related to a business which had not traded for 18 months and that he was having discussions with council officials.

He said he believed that details of the action being taken against him had been leaked as part of an attempt to smear him and the Tory group in order to distract attention from the poll tax reduction.

## Youth shot dead 'after £80 raid'

By BILL FROST

A TEENAGER was shot dead with a blast in the back after being ordered to get on the floor during a filling station robbery, a court was told yesterday.

Raymond Kelly, aged 17, was killed with a 12-bore sawn-off shotgun, David Elfer, QC, for the prosecution, told Winchester crown court. Two men escaped after the robbery, taking £70 to £80, he said.

Jamil Chowdhary, aged 25, of Reading, Berkshire, and Mohammed Nazir, aged 21, of no fixed address, deny murder. Mr Chowdhary also denies robbery. Mr Nazir admits robbery.

Mr Elfer said that the raid took place on February 1 last year at the Phoenix Green filling station on the A30 London road at Hartley Wintney, near Basingstoke, Hampshire. Two masked men, behaving with "ruthless calm", entered the station where Sophie Ashworth, aged 19, the daughter of the owner, was working as a cashier. Keeping her company were Raymond Kelly and Matthew Pollock, both aged 17.

Mr Nazir, with a red and white scarf around his face, selected a drink from a cabinet and went to the counter as Mr Chowdhary came in. Mr Elfer said: "You can imagine the shock and the fear which was caused to these three youngsters when they realised

man number two was carrying a sawn-off shotgun, 12-bore."

Mr Chowdhary ordered the boys to get down on the floor and pointed the gun at them while Mr Nazir demanded the takings from Miss Ashworth. As Mr Nazir took £70 to £80 from Miss Ashworth, Mr Chowdhary shot Raymond Kelly in the back and the two ran away, the court was told. Kelly was shot with the gun muzzle inches from his back.

Mr Elfer said that on the night of the robbery Mr Nazir returned home and went to the bathroom saying he had shot a boy. The jury might find he had not pulled the trigger "but you may think you could not have a better example of the jointness of this escapade but that he sat on the lavatory grieving at what had taken place and was identifying himself as being just as responsible as the man who pulled the trigger," Mr Elfer said.

Matthew Pollock told the jury that when the second man entered the filling station shop area with a gun shouting at them to get down, he thought it was a friend playing a joke.

Raymond got down on his hands and knees with his head on the floor and he got down in a similar position in front of him. There was a shout of "Give me the money" and he saw the till tray being



Sophie Ashworth, garage owner's daughter, said the shot went off after she handed over the money

handed over. "Then I saw the gun come down between the two of us. I heard a bang," he said. Both he and Raymond had been saying to each other "I am going to get shot," he told the jury.

Miss Ashworth said the shot went off immediately after she handed the money over. There was no reaction from the first man and both men seemed quite calm.

Questioned by Douglas Draycott QC for the defence of Nazir, she said nothing had happened to cause the shooting. There had been no sudden movement or resistance from anybody.

Mr Elfer said the robbery might never have taken place

at the garage as two men had been seen earlier that night at another filling station eight miles away but had left after being spotted. He said Chowdhary had been anxious to raise money.

Mr Elfer told the court that a black and white video stills camera recorded the raid and the jury was shown photographs of the two teenagers lying on the floor and a masked man holding a shotgun.

In fact, Mr Elfer said, it appeared that both men were armed as a woman saw two men run off, one with a sawn-off shotgun, the other with a handgun.

The trial continues today.

## British Gas accused of sex bias

By TIM JONES

AN INDUSTRIAL tribunal heard yesterday that a woman who was demoted from her £45,000 a year job with British Gas was told: "Thank God you have taken it like a man, although you are the wrong shape."

Hilary Williams, aged 48, a former southwest regional marketing manager with British Gas, is claiming sexual discrimination against the company. Sue Ashbury, her solicitor, said that the comment was made by Tony Roddis, the regional marketing director.

She said that Ms Williams, from Weston, Bath, Avon, would argue that she had been relegated to a lower post during a company reorganisation because of her sex.

The tribunal was told that British Gas, in an internal assessment of Ms Williams's performance, had described her as being of management potential. But Ms Ashbury said the company would claim that while Ms Williams was on a posting to London, the man seconded to do her job did it "very much better."

After grievance procedures had begun, the tribunal was told, Barry Adams, the regional domestic marketing manager, wrote to condemn Ms Williams's work.

The hearing continues today.

## Airlines to meet long-haul demand

By HARVEY ELLIOTT, AIR CORRESPONDENT

TWO new long-haul airlines are to be created to cater for the growing demand from British tourists for holidays in America, the Caribbean and the Far East.

The travel industry is reporting higher bookings than ever, with long-haul growing faster than journeys to the Mediterranean. Few airlines, however, have aircraft capable of flying the long distances involved without a stop.

The Irish registered Transflit Airways is to begin operations from British airports immediately with two re-engined McDonnell Douglas DC8s capable of flying 235 passengers non-stop to all the main American holiday destinations. Next year Unijet, one of Britain's leading tour operators, will begin charter services with two long range Boeing 767s, each capable of carrying 326 passengers.

"While it is unusual for a tour operator to take on this kind of commitment we have done so because there is a shortage of genuine long range aircraft in British charter airline fleets," Chris Parker, chairman of Unijet, said.

The chairman of Transflit, P.J. McGoldrick, said that he had sold more than half of the capacity on his aircraft even before the season had begun and was certain that demand would grow.

The Unijet aircraft will be operated by Air UK Leisure, based in Stansted, Essex, and will begin services from London and Manchester to Orlando from May 1 next year. Seats will be sold to other tour operators as well as to Unijet, which will use the aircraft to extend its charter routes to the Caribbean, Africa and South America as well as the American west coast.

A third Transflit DC8 will be used for long distance cargo carrying - another fast growing area with a shortage of capacity.

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## 41 nations plumb oceans' depths

By NICK NUTTALL, TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

SCIENTISTS, naval architects, engineers and computer specialists have gathered in Brighton for the opening today of Oceanology International 92.

The conference, sponsored by the Society for Underwater Technology, has attracted around 3,500 delegates from 41 countries including China, Australia, America, Iraq, Ghana and Greece.

Chaired by Colin Summerhayes, director of the Natural Environment Research Council's Deacon laboratory, it is billed as the world's biggest ocean science and technology event. The theme, the global ocean, reflects increasing international co-operation towards trying to unravel the role of the oceans in climate through the deployment of robots and other monitoring machines.

Ocean secrets L&T section, page 6

## Back to work

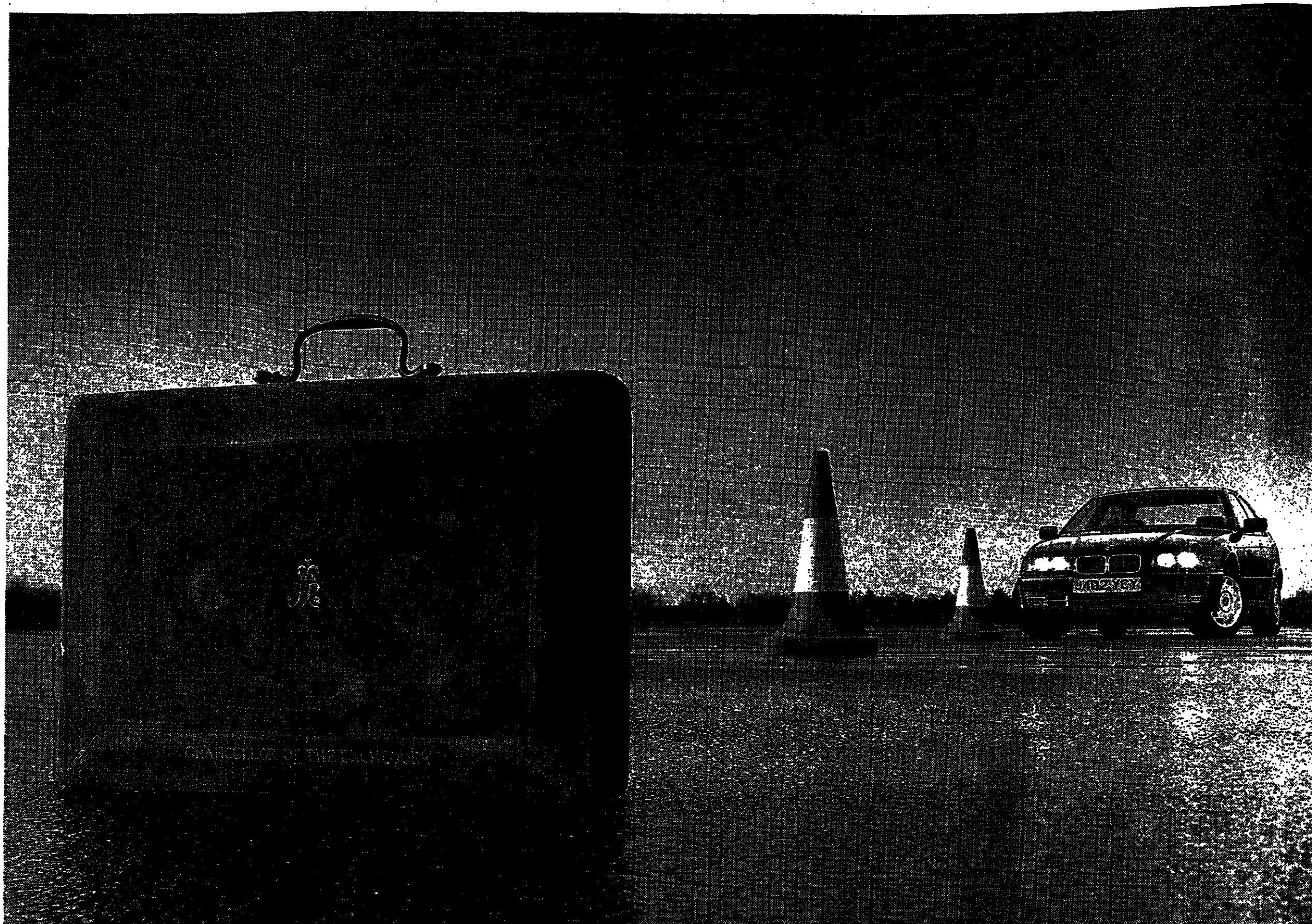
Stephanie Slater, who was kidnapped for eight days by a man posing as a house buyer, returned to work yesterday as an estate agency sales negotiator. Miss Slater, aged 25, was greeted warmly by colleagues at Shipways, Great Barr, Birmingham, including Kevin Warrs, the branch manager who risked his life to deliver the £175,000 ransom which had been demanded by her kidnapper.

## Police post

Sir Leonard Peach, former chief executive of the National Health Service management board, is to become chairman of the Police Complaints Authority in August, replacing the present chairman, Judge Francis Petre, who is retiring. Sir Leonard, aged 59, is director of personnel and corporate affairs at IBM.

## Royal catch

A sturgeon has been netted off Weymouth, Dorset, for the first time since 1907. The 4ft fish is in quarantine in Weymouth Sea-Life Centre and will stay there unless the Queen, who is entitled to all sturgeon caught in British waters, rules otherwise.



## YET ANOTHER THING A BMW 320i AVOIDS WITH EASE.

Are BMW encouraging you to get around the Chancellor?  
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It's a decision that's easily justified. The 320i is the only 6 cylinder, 2 litre car to pass below the £19,250 tax threshold. (Of course, things may change this afternoon...)

However, outmanoeuvring the Chancellor isn't the car's only achievement. Consider, for example, its enhanced handling and stability, afforded by the new 3 Series' chassis.

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## Recorded crime toll rises by 16% as clear-up figures fall

BY RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

RECORDED crime in England and Wales rose by 16 per cent last year with 5.3 million offences reported to the police, according to Home Office figures published yesterday.

The statistics obscure the fact that the average annual rate of increase between 1982 and 1992 was six per cent and that there are numerous reasons why an increase might be recorded.

Almost 30 per cent of recorded crimes were car crimes, where relatively high reporting and recording rates result from insurance requirements. Figures for sex crimes often result from local police tactics: whether they make the reporting of rape easier or how seriously they pursue homosexual offenders.

The figures show that 94 per cent of reported offences were crimes against property, 5 per cent violent crimes, and 1 per cent other crimes. A total of 730,000 more offences were recorded. The increase includes 140,000 more thefts from motor vehicles (up 18 per cent), 90,000 more thefts of vehicles (up 18 per cent), 210,000 more burglaries (up 21 per cent) and 88,000 more offences of criminal damage (up 12 per cent).

The police recorded 265,000 offences of violent crime, an increase of 15,000 on 1990. Of these, 174,000

were wounding offences, 45,000 cases of robbery, 29,000 sexual offences, and 16,000 cases of murder and serious wounding. Offences of violence rose by 5,600 (up three per cent), sexual offences by 390 (up 1 per cent) and robberies by 9,100 (up 25 per cent). Robberies accounted for 60 per cent of the total increase in violent crime.

The number of reported rapes rose by 660 to 4,000, though there was a drop of 195 to 964 in the number of offences of indecency between males.

The overall clear-up rate declined from 32 per cent to 29 per cent, as the rise in recorded crime outweighed a 7 per cent improvement in solving offences.

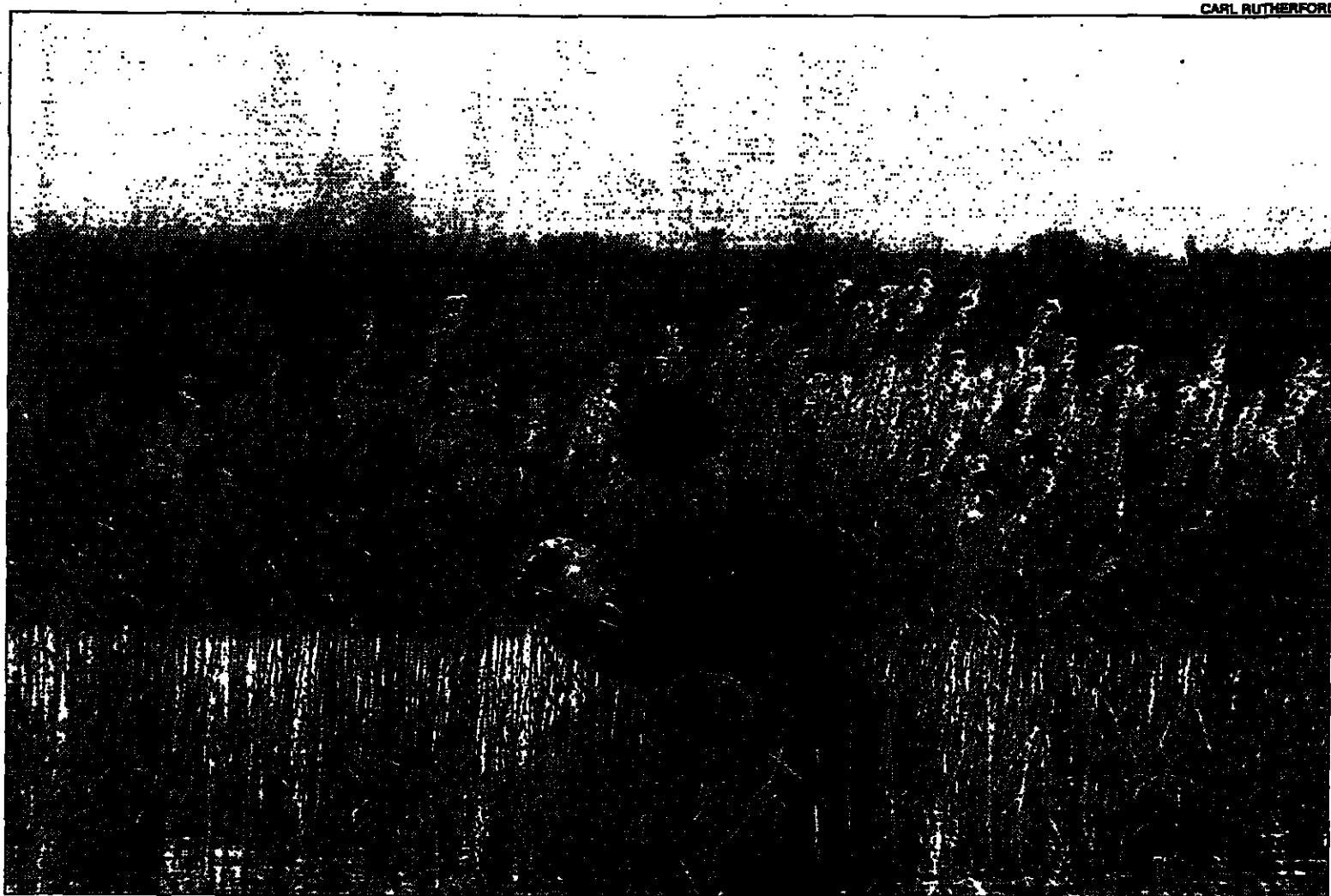
The 43 police forces in England and Wales all recorded increases in crime but the 16 per cent overall rise disguised wide variations. Cumberland recorded a rise from 33,300 to 45,000 (up 35 per cent) and Kent a rise from 103,300 to 138,800 (up 34 per cent), while Cleveland recorded a rise from 73,800 to 78,000 (up 5 per cent) and Suffolk from 37,700 to 39,900 (up 5 per cent).

While expressing serious concern, the Association of Chief Police Officers cautioned against taking the statistics at face value. Albert Pacey, the chief constable of Gloucestershire, said that the

threshold of tolerance had lowered for some people.

"Add to this the vastly increased availability of valuable items, more accurate police reporting systems, a clear increase in people's readiness to report some types of crime — including sexual offences, criminal damage, and indeed vehicle theft and burglary — together with other social factors, and you have the ingredients for a high level of crime. No single factor holds the key," he said.

The government has released the figures earlier than usual in what Labour politicians saw as an effort to minimise their embarrassment potential ahead of the official general election campaign. The Opposition also attacked the Tories' law and order image. Roy Hattersley, the shadow home secretary, said: "The government cannot shirk the blame. It is the home secretary who should be in the dock."



Greener fields: Jeremy Garside, conservation officer with Cleveland Wildlife Trust, on part of the 2,500 acres at Tees Mouth which will form Britain's biggest man-made nature reserve. The £11 million scheme, unveiled yesterday by Michael Heseltine, the environment secretary, will feature lakes, salt marshes and woodland to attract wildlife. Teesside Focus, pages 26-29

### Anti-hunt MP tells of threats

A Labour MP who opposes hunting has said that he has been threatened. He has installed a panic button connecting his home to the local police station to protect his family.

Ron Davies, MP for Caerphilly, Mid Glamorgan, a sponsor of the bill to outlaw hunting, said that he was almost run off the road while driving home and received an anonymous warning that a dead cow would be dumped on his lawn. He was later confronted by two men while walking his dog.

A "set-up" fight between his dog and another ensued and Mr Davies said one of the men told him: "We've got you this time. That dog of yours is a killer."

### Murder charge

William O'Donnell, aged 36, of Penryn, Dyfed, was remanded in custody until March 30 charged with the murder of Adele James, aged 25, who was found strangled at Pembroke Dock.

### Top brass

Brighouse and Rastrick are Yorkshire's brass band champions after winning the regional competition. Grime-thorpe Colliery was second and both bands will represent Yorkshire in the national finals in London in October.

### Boy injured

Matthew Allen, aged nine, of Grimethorpe, South Yorkshire, is in intensive care after being hit by a car while trying to take Cateyes from the centre of the road, police said.

### Lawyer's loan halts nuns case

A FORMER nun's High Court property action against an order of French sisters was adjourned yesterday when her lawyers, including a solicitor with a "personal stake" in the dispute, withdrew from the case.

Patricia Wright, aged 60, is at loggerheads with The Sisters of the Congregation of St Martin of Tours over possession of a house in Highgate, north London. The property had been her home from 1940 to 1981, when she signed it over to the nuns joining their order. In 1985, she left them and moved back in with another nun, Sister Denise Dalichoux.

During a five-day hearing in London, Miss Wright has refused an offer of £55,000 or a £75,000 interest-free loan for life to settle the dispute.

The adjournment was prompted by a loan of £100,000 to Miss Wright by her solicitor, Anthony Keogh, with which she has bought a house in Ruislip, Middlesex, where she lives with Sister Dalichoux. The loan made it "quite improper or at least undesirable" for Mr Keogh to continue to act, said Mr Justice Buckley. He did not see how Mr Keogh could advise her on a settlement offer when he had such a personal involvement.

Miss Wright's counsel, Christopher Strachan, also withdrew after saying that he felt professionally embarrassed in continuing without a solicitor. Mr Justice Buckley said Miss Wright should be given independent advice on her position. No date was set for the resumed hearing.

### Fry-ups take holiday from hotel menus

BY LIN JENKINS

THE traditional fry-up as the quintessential English holiday breakfast is vanishing, in favour of soya milk, polyunsaturated margarine and decaffeinated coffee, according to a new guide.

When the *Healthy Holiday Guide* was first published 14 years ago, only 176 hotels and guest houses qualified for inclusion. Now there are nearly 2,000 entries of establishments which welcome vegetarians, vegans and slimmers, rather than regarding them as an insult to the hospitality offered. The guide also lists leisure facilities, as more people demand healthier holidays rather than days of indulgence and relaxation.

Catherine Mooney, the author, said vegetarianism was still a relatively esoteric notion when the guide was first published. "Cornflakes have long been upstaged by the once despised guinea pig food, muesli, and guest house proprietors find that they have to be as adept at con-

cocting vegetarian kedgeree for breakfast as they used to have to be with the fry-up," she said.

"It would appear that the old notion of a holiday being a time of indulgence, or even a break from routine, is a thing of the past: work hard, play hard and holiday hard is perhaps a more commonplace leisure expectation of the 1990s than is generally realised."

Another guide, *Eat, Drink and Sleep Smoke Free 1992*, lists 2,000 places where smoking is banned in eating areas. David Pollock, director of Action on Smoking and Health, said: "Smoke free air is now a significant factor in helping customers decide on their choice of hotel, restaurant or pub."

*Healthy Holiday Guide 1992* by Catherine Mooney, £7.95; *Eat, Drink and Sleep Smoke Free 1992* (edited by Catherine Mooney, £8.95); both published by Headway Books

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# MPs demand pension law changes after Maxwell raids

By JILL SHERMAN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

A COMMONS committee yesterday called for a drastic overhaul of pension laws to protect pensioners and prevent employers from "looting" their pension funds as Robert Maxwell had done.

In a critical report, the all-party social security select committee calls for "medieval" trusts laws to be replaced by a secure legal framework for pension funds. It recommends that a public enquiry, possibly a royal commission, should be set up immediately after the general election to draw up a new

pensions bill, to be enacted within three years.

The enquiry, which would collect evidence from the public, would be expected to report within nine months so that legislation could be introduced in the second year of a new government. The committee makes clear that the speed of the enquiry was more important than its make-up. It could be a social security department committee.

The 95-page report presents a scathing indictment of the lax legislation covering pension funds and

criticises the regulatory bodies and the government for allowing millions of pounds to be siphoned off from the Mirror Group Newspapers pension fund.

The report suggests that the Occupational Pensions Board and the Investment Management Regulatory Organisation have been ineffective in preventing what could be widespread abuse of pension funds.

"Pontius Pilate would have blushed at the spectacle of so many witnesses washing their hands in public before the committee of their responsibilities in this affair," the report says. It criticises professional advisers for deflecting the committee's questions to other experts.

The Commons is also criticised. "Parliament has a responsibility towards those in occupational pension schemes that is not adequately fulfilled," the report says.

The MPs make clear that their investigation on pensions funds was initiated in July 1991, months before Robert Maxwell's death, and their recommendations go far wider than the Mirror Group Newspapers fund. However, the report insists



Bottles galore: Victoria Coode of Christie's with a few of the more than 3,000 bottles of French wine and champagne from the late Robert

Maxwell's wine cellar at Headington Hill Hall, his Oxford home. They are to be auctioned at Christie's in London on March 26 (Sarah Jane

Checkland writes). The cellar includes 772 magnums, or double-sized bottles, and 12 double-magnums, with 2,000 normal sized bottles.

A new Pension Act in the next Parliament replacing present trust law.

An urgent public enquiry to recommend new laws within nine months.

A revamped Occupational Pensions Board with powers to fine law breakers should supervise pension funds.

The enquiry should consider a pension compensation fund for the future.

An incoming government should safeguard Maxwell pensioners whose assets have been stolen. Current pensions should continue to be paid

and lost pensions should be reinstated.

The next government should tell banks who hold disputed share certificates of the pension funds that they have a moral, if not legal, responsibility to return those assets.

Independent custodian trustees should hold pension fund investment assets.

The enquiry should decide whether a pensioner can have the right to move his pension assets to another financial institution annually.

Contributors and pensioners should be able to veto the transfer of their assets.

that any party forming the next government should consider moves to safeguard the position of Maxwell pensioners whose assets were plundered.

"The first task is to ensure that current pensions continue to be paid, and those who have already lost their pen-

sions have those pensions reinstated," the report says. The government should tell banks which received pension fund assets from Mr Maxwell as security against loans that they had a moral, if not legal, duty to return the money. The independent enquiry should look at whether a pen-

sion compensation fund should be set up and whether it could operate within a new pensions act.

The committee's document reflects the efforts of its chairman, Frank Field, Labour MP for Birkenhead, to produce a unanimous report before Parliament was

dissolved. A report on the Maxwell brothers, which will go to the Commons, and evidence from other trustees is to be published separately this week.

Differences between committee members were reflected at yesterday's press conference, suggesting that Labour MPs had wanted to be more critical of the government and City organisations. Mr Field admitted that a section covering the history of pension law, which is understood to criticise successive governments, was taken out.

The report does say that with hindsight, political parties made a big error in letting the present system develop in such a piecemeal way.

"That there have not been scandals of an equal dimension to that perpetrated on Maxwell-owned pension funds owes more to the decency of employers and the integrity of trustees than it does to trust law, which provides the legal regulation for the second most important and fastest-growing sector of personal wealth [after houses]," the MPs say.

"We believe that pension funds should be governed by laws analogous to those gov-

erning companies. We believe, along with many of those whom we interviewed, that change in the law is urgent."

The report criticises the Occupational Pensions Board for failing to monitor adequately the Maxwell-run schemes. "That the Secretary of State for Social Security told the committee that his department was in discussion with some of the Maxwell-run pension funds to transfer funds from the national insurance scheme in order that the guaranteed minimum pension payments could be met suggests something of the scale of the fraud which has taken place and the failure of the regulatory system," the MPs say.

The new Occupational Pensions Board, which would become the main supervisory body for the pensions industry, would have ten new functions. It would monitor the appointment and disappearance of trustees and have the right of veto over unsuitable appointments.

It would co-ordinate the rules of professional advisers and co-ordinate all the official bodies involved with policing funds. It would also act as a centre for the registering of warning signs and worrying trends and monitor the winding up of funds.

The report suggests that pension fund accounts should be lodged with the board within seven months of the end of the account year. Pension fund members should be given annual statements of their scheme's assets and contributors should have the right to veto the transfer of their assets.

The MPs say the way the Investment Management Regulatory Organisation (IMRO) carried out its duties "suggests to the committee that this aspect of the system of self-regulation is when the chips are down — little short of a tragic comedy".

The present self-regulatory IMRO system "shows itself to be completely inadequate when faced by a clever fraudster," the report says.

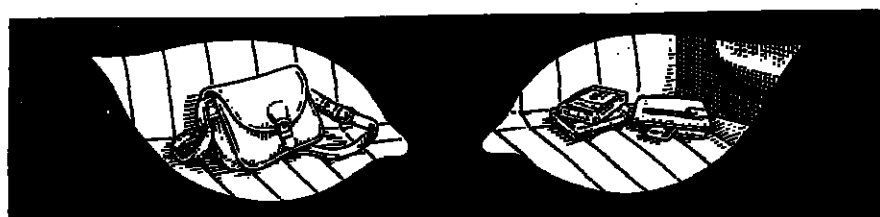
Banks criticised, page 1  
Leading article, page 15  
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## Cheques stop and despair starts

By BILL FROST

ERNEST Osborne learnt early last Friday morning that he was to be deprived of a £600-a-month cheque from the Maxwell Communication works pension scheme.

Watching a television news bulletin, he and his wife heard that, along with 8,500 other Maxwell company pensioners, he was to be cut off without a penny at the end of June. Mirror Group Newspapers could no longer support all their former publisher's victims.

"I was devastated. It felt as though I had been hit by a steamroller," Mr Osborne said yesterday. "Ever since before Christmas, when the full extent of the financial crisis became known, I had expected the worst. Then it is confirmed and the nightmare comes true."

Mr Osborne was building manager at the Daily Mirror's Holborn Circus offices in central London for 24 years. Not long before retirement he discovered his pension had been transferred from the newspaper fund as Maxwell lived off building services to another corner of his tottering empire.

"To live like this has been soul-destroying. Most nights I cannot get to sleep and, if I do, I wake up in the early

hours worrying. I have lost a stone in weight over the last couple of months," Mr Osborne said. His wife Violet, aged 69, had been "absolutely destroyed" by the loss of the couple's Maxwell pension.

With a £160 monthly mortgage on their bungalow at Goring-by-Sea, West Sussex, the Osbornes now fear repossession by the building society. "The state pension of £86 a week for the two of us is nowhere near enough. We have two poll tax payments to make and work that needs to be carried out on the house," Mr Osborne said.

The couple have cancelled their annual holiday to Spain, cut the weekly shopping list and are preparing for penury. Mr Osborne said: "I would try to get a job, but I am too old. Eventually I will have to swallow my pride and seek cash help from the social security office."

He welcomed the select committee's recommendations but said they had come too late. "The law should have been changed years ago. There were those who knew what Maxwell was up to. Employees like me thought he was just arrogant but now we find out he was crooked too."

## New laws estimated to take three years

By LINDSAY COOK, MONEY EDITOR

AN ENQUIRY committee into occupational pensions would take up to two years to produce draft laws which could be brought in a year later, the Institute of Actuaries said yesterday.

Roy Brimblecombe, chairman of the institute's pensions committee, said: "They would be starting with a fresh piece of paper." They could not just adapt existing laws.

For a pensions act to be implemented within three years it would have to be strongly supported by the government. Mike Brown, of the National Association of Pension Funds, which represents schemes covering 7 million employees and 4 million pensioners, said that he hoped legislation could be in place sooner. In the meantime there would be little redress for pensioners in schemes which collapse. New legislation is likely to

force the 200,000 pension schemes not run by insurance companies to have independent trustees. The Occupational Pensions Board, which monitors schemes contracted out of the state earnings related pension scheme, could be enlarged to vet them.

The National Association of Pension Funds called in January for a balance between member and employer trustees and the appointment of independent trustees. It wants custodians unrelated to the employing company to hold assets and confirmation by auditors that assets are being held and invested. The financial services act compensation scheme should be extended to cover occupational pension schemes, it says.

Mr Brimblecombe said legislation should safeguard pension scheme members properly, and strengthen the role of actuaries.



well raids

## Smith draws up new spending list Labour hopes for Budget windfall

By Philip Webster and Nicholas Wood

THE Labour leadership is preparing to add to its firm spending pledges by unveiling a new list of specific commitments in the wake of today's Budget.

John Smith, the shadow chancellor, will outline how today's tax giveaway would be carved up by the spending ministers in an incoming Labour government. Labour is already committed to reversing any cuts in the basic rate announced by Norman Lamont today and devoting the money instead to spending on the key public services.

Mr Smith, it was learnt yesterday, has been holding informal private discussions with leading members of the shadow cabinet to discuss their priorities in key areas such as health, education, the environment and employment.

So far Labour has made only three definite spending promises — a £5-a-week increase in the pension for a single person (£8 for a couple), an increase in child benefit to £9.95 a week from current

levels of £9.25 for the first child and £7.50 for others, and a £1 billion economic recovery package.

The first two would cost £3.65 billion. Labour believes that its combined National Insurance and higher rate tax plans would raise enough to meet the bill.

The leadership's desire to appear cautious on the economy has led to a rigorous appraisal of priorities with repeated warnings that Labour's programme for government may take time, and that it will spend only what the country can afford.

The Budget, however, and its closeness to the election, has given Labour an opportunity it had not anticipated to add to its pledges without increasing borrowing.

Mr Smith has underlined that he will operate as Chancellor on the public sector borrowing requirement he inherits from the Conservatives. But he will use most of the tax giveaway — £2 billion for a 1p cut in the basic rate — for spending. Some of the extra revenue could be used to soften the impact of Labour's taxation plans, notably the plan to lift the ceiling on National Insurance contributions, which will hit many potential supporters in London and the Southeast.

Up to now the shadow budget has been eagerly awaited for further details of the tax plans. Confusion over tax cost Labour dearly in the last election and damaged it in January when the Tories launched their "tax bombshell" campaign. Nervousness persists in the leadership that the additional pledges will be seized upon by the Conservatives and added to their "shopping list" of Labour commitments which they have already costed at some £37 billion. However, Labour's spokesmen will be able to argue that the new pledges are fully covered by Mr Lamont's giveaway.

The Labour leadership has yet to decide whether Mr Smith should go beyond announcing the broad totals for the "departmental budgets" next Tuesday and give the detailed breakdowns himself, or whether shadow ministers will call their own press conferences during the campaign to spell out how their share of the cake is to be distributed.

On the eve of the Budget Mr Cook again highlighted the straight economic choice between a penny off income tax or £2 billion to invest in the public services. He hinted strongly at Labour's change of tactics in earmarking specific spending priorities. He told a Westminster press conference that a modest fraction of the money it would cost to take 1p off income tax, you could make major gains in the health service.

Mr Cook said that for one-twentieth of the cost of a penny off income tax, the government could improve the health service by creating an extra 230 posts in clinical oncology, freeing prescription charges, restoring 1,000 of the "lost" nursing posts, modernising and re-equipping medical research centres, creating an additional 150 posts for heart specialists, or opening new paediatric intensive care beds.

Harriet Harman, the shadow health minister, gave further illustrations of how the money could be spent, including new ambulances, repairing hospitals and providing nursery places for the children of nurses.

Jack Cunningham, Labour's campaign co-ordinator, said the country needed a Budget to modernise Britain. "I suspect the only good thing for the people of Britain about tomorrow's statement by Mr Lamont is that it will be the final Budget from a Conservative Chancellor after 13 years of Tory neglect of our vital public services."

Mr Cook said Mr Lamont would decide in his Budget on the choice between building better services for the public or buying re-election for the Tories. "In April it will be the public who make that choice. They will not forgive a government that insults with a bribe when it could invest to build."

The Liberal Democrats also called tax cuts a bribe. Nicol Stephen, its economics spokesman, said: "I think it is largely going to be an act of theatre designed purely for the general election. If the Chancellor was looking to the long-term best interests of the country, he would increase public borrowing to invest, to invest in capital projects. Tax cuts are purely a bribe to get them through the next three and a half weeks of the general election."



Elder spokesmen: Sir Robin Day with Lord Jenkins of Hillhead, centre, and Denis Healey, left, bring their political experience to bear on the general election. Together with Norman Tebbit, they will discuss the issues and the personalities on BBC Breakfast News

## Patten in row over Tory funds

By Robert Morgan

CHRIS Patten, the Tory chairman, was involved in bitter exchanges in the Commons yesterday about donations to the party from foreign-based businesses. Several times Labour MPs were warned not to raise issues currently before the courts.

Dennis Skinner, the Labour MP for Bolsover, said he would be reminding electors that the Tory campaign was financed by money from Hong Kong, from a Greek financier, and from £440,000 that Asif Nadir, the former chairman of Polly Peck, "stole from his company".

Bernard Weatherill, the Speaker, told Mr Skinner to bear in mind that some of these issues were before the courts, but Mr Skinner pressed on, saying that the Tory party should send the money back just as the Labour party had agreed to return any money from Robert Maxwell if it were found to be from the pension fund.

Mr Patten replied: "I do not think that the Labour party could possibly repay the debt it owes to the late Captain Maxwell." He added that the electors would have "as little faith in Labour policies as Mr Skinner does".

Derek Wright, the new Labour MP for Hemsworth, said that Mr Patten should restore the "half million pounds stolen from the shareholders of Polly Peck". He added that the Tory party should refrain from "wallowing in sleaze".

Mr Patten retorted: "The Opposition, as one recalls from studying the affairs surrounding the Maxwell group, knows everything there is to know about sleaze."

## Volunteer forces need better training, MPs say

By Michael Evans, Defence Correspondent

THE government's plan to boost the role of the reserve forces must be backed up with better training and improved resources, a report by the Commons defence committee said yesterday.

The MPs said they were surprised that no government official had been able to confirm that more resources would be given to the Territorial Army, in spite of a pledge

from Archie Hamilton, minister for the armed forces, that an increase in training was essential. The volunteer reserves provided "a priceless source of trained and willing manpower", the MPs said.

Like their regular counterparts, reservists needed "exciting and realistic training and exercise". If voluntary service ceased to be worthwhile, volunteers would not

say. The MPs said it was unsatisfactory that, during the committee hearings, officials "were unable to give an undertaking, even in broad terms, that more resources would be devoted to TA training".

Under the government's Options for Change defence review, the TA's infantry strength is to be reduced from 41 battalions to 36, with ten battalions amalgamated. This would help reduce the TA's annual budget of £250 million, the MPs said.

At the same time, the number of training days had dropped from 40 in 1990-1 to 36 in 1991-2. The report said: "The provision of adequate training opportunities is crucial for the calibre of all Britain's reserve forces."

The MPS said there was disappointment in the TA that more of them were not called up to take part in the force sent to the Gulf conflict. The report expressed concern over cuts in the Royal Naval Reserve and called on the government to review its decision to axe the RNR's port diver's branch, which had a war role defending UK ports.

"We consider that this decision may have been taken hastily and with less than the thorough consideration it merited," the report said.

□ A £9 million contract to upgrade a key sonar system on Britain's nuclear-powered submarines has been awarded to Marconi Underwater Systems, Kenneth Carlisle, the junior defence procurement minister, announced yesterday.

Defence Committee fourth report, Options for Change—Reserve Forces, Stationery Office, £16.60.

## Lib Dems back small businesses

By Sheila Gunn, Political Correspondent

THE law should be changed to charge interest to late bill-payers and to freeze the uniform business rate, according to the Liberal Democrat manifesto for small firms, published yesterday.

The document accused the Tories of encouraging individuals to strike out on their own and then weighting the economic dice against small businesses. It said that Labour had no understanding of the needs of small businesses as its economic programme was founded on benefiting "union paymasters".

"Business people spend their time wrapped up in bureaucratic red tape. Late payments of debts and high taxation can cause cashflow crises, sending viable firms to the wall," the Liberal Democrats said.

Nicol Stephen, the MP for Kincardine and Deeside, said that without immediate help 1992 would be as bleak for small firms as last year, when 47,777 businesses failed.

He recommended: □ A statutory right to interest on late payment of debt, with large firms required to declare unpaid debts and interest in accounts.

□ Cancellation of the 4.1 per cent rise in the uniform business rate in 1992-3.

□ Integration of income tax and national insurance contributions.

□ A cabinet minister responsible for small businesses.

□ Better banking services for small firms.

Mr Stephen said a recent survey showed that 95 per cent of private firms believed that legislation to discourage late payment of bills would benefit business in general.



## BR bonus claim denied

The government denied reports that Sir Bob Reid, the British Rail chairman, will receive a £53,000 bonus for meeting train punctuality targets under the passenger's charter.

Roger Freeman, the public transport minister, speaking during transport questions, said: "There is no truth whatsoever in these articles."

In a sharp exchange with John Prescott, the shadow transport secretary, Mr Freeman said: "I would advise Mr Prescott not to believe what he reads in the newspapers."

## £80 TV licence

The regulations to increase the colour television licence fee from £77 to £80 on April 1 were laid before Parliament yesterday. The monochrome licence fee goes up from £25.50 to £26.50.

## Roads safer

Provisional figures indicate that in 1991 there were fewer deaths on Britain's roads than in any year since the 1940s, despite a ninefold increase in traffic. Malcolm Rifkind, the transport secretary, said.

## Drugs vigil

Although frontier formalities will ease with the completion of the EC single market on January 1, British customs officers will continue to conduct "sharply focused" anti-smuggling spot checks to detect illicit drugs and "other serious threats to society", Gillian Shephard, the Treasury minister, said in a written reply.

## Shared site

The international passenger station for Channel tunnel traffic at Ashford in East Kent is to share the site of the existing Network SouthEast station, Malcolm Rifkind, the transport secretary, indicated in a written reply. He has asked British Rail to put forward a full investment submission.

## Parliament today

Commons (2.30): Questions: Employment; prime minister. The Budget; Lords (2.30): Education (Schools) Bill, report.

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Arms deal: John Major meets Qian Qichen, the Chinese foreign minister, who led a delegation to deliver a nuclear non-proliferation document to the British government yesterday

## SNP promises to create jobs and end poverty

By Kerry Gill

A FAIRER tax system, 200,000 new jobs and the removal of poverty were offered by the Scottish National Party yesterday when it disclosed details of its budget for the first term of an independent Scottish parliament.

Alex Neil, who would act as chancellor should the nationalists take power, said his party's medium term recovery strategy, planned for the period 1992 to 1996, would regenerate the Scottish economy instead of allowing it to stagnate under Westminster.

"After the first four years of an SNP government in an independent Scotland we will have created 200,000 new jobs, we will bring Scotland into budget surplus, we will have altered the tax system to

make it more equitable and we will have revitalised the benefits system to remove thousands of Scots families from the despair of poverty," he said. Mr Neil said that a devolved assembly was incapable of such achievements as it would have no power over the larger economic matters.

Iain Lawson, the SNP's industry and employment spokesman, said that up to a third of the jobs promised would be created in the first year. Unemployment would be cut to less than 5 per cent by the fourth year.

The SNP will create an investment fund to stimulate industrial expansion, research and development, and the introduction of new technologies," he said.

## Ailing friendly societies given a boost

By Arthur Leathley

A BILL offering friendly societies greater financial freedom was given an unopposed second reading in the Commons last night.

The Friendly Societies Bill extends the services available to hundreds of societies which have existed for many centuries, and will enable them to set up subsidiaries, allowing them to compete more equally with other financial organisations.

The bill allows any two or more societies to amalgamate by establishing an incorporated society. A commission, set up under the legislation, would supervise any such changes.

John Maples, economic secretary, said the bill was "the first major overhaul of the law relating to friendly

societies for over a century". He told MPs that societies retained an important function for investors but were restricted by being unable to set up subsidiaries.

The bill would enable a society in "terminal decline" to merge with another society or financial body. Under the proposed legislation, societies could establish subsidiaries to handle activities such as provision of personal equity plans, unit trusts, insurance, pension and credit schemes, as well as establishing sheltered housing, residential homes for the elderly and hospitals.

The traditional nature of societies would be protected and Mr Maples said that the new plans would offer greater flexibility to societies,

many of whom were in decline. The new law would not diminish the freedom of societies but would enhance it.

A commission would regulate societies' activities, promote financial stability and protect members' funds and would report annually to Parliament. Societies would need permission from the commission to establish any new business.

Paul Boateng, a Labour Treasury spokesman, said that the number of societies had fallen from 2,740 in 1945 to fewer than 500 today, with more than 100 no longer taking on new business. The number of society members had fallen from 7.8 million immediately after the war to three million. He welcomed the initiative

but said that the government had taken too long before introducing "in the last moments of this government", a bill which could have been introduced many months earlier and which was now undergoing "a second reading in oblivion".

"We have no qualms with the content of this measure. What we are concerned about is the time it has taken to reach this place."

He was anxious that more scope should be given to friendly societies in the face of over-aggressive salesmanship by life insurance companies. He criticised such companies for not informing clients of the full costs, including salesmen's commission, of taking out a policy.

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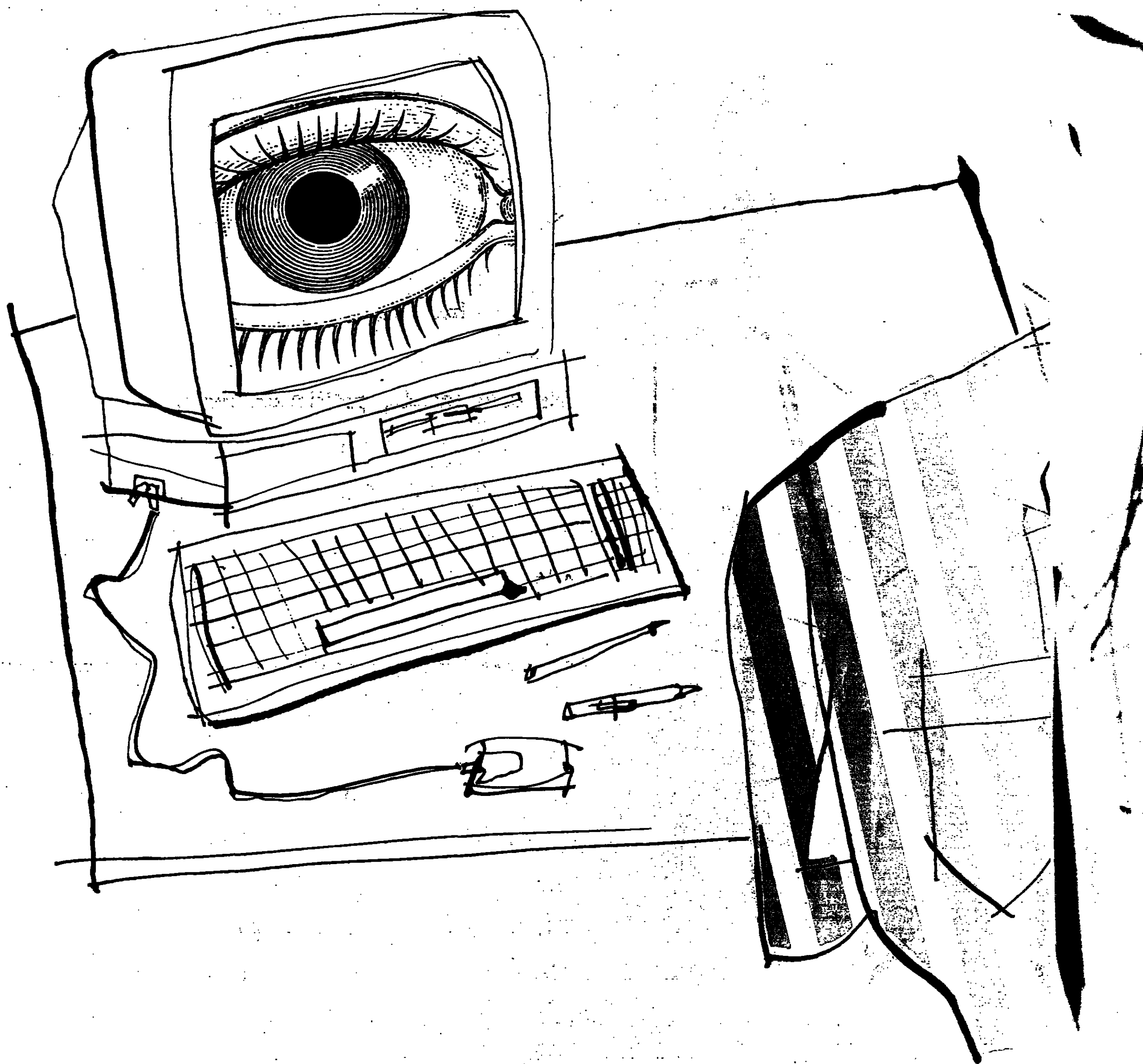
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Super Tuesday race card has Southerners wishing for brand-new faces at the starting gate

# Bush switches on his vote-winning smile

FROM PETER STOTHARD, US EDITOR, IN WASHINGTON

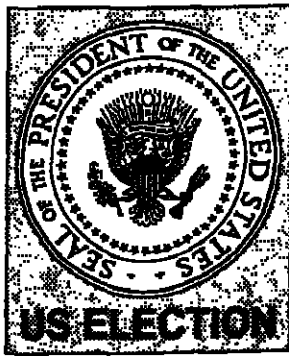
ON THE eve of the biggest voting day of the presidential campaign, one Democrat dropped out, the president promised to be "pleasant" to his rival Patrick Buchanan, and a poll of weary Southern voters registered a wish for more names to choose from.

In Iowa, Senator Tom Harkin said goodbye. His falling bid for the White House, marked by class warfare and showy appeals for Americans "to get off your knees", proved that, whatever today's results, the Democratic presidential voters have rejected that old-time left-wing religion.

In Washington, Mr Bush produced a new election motto: "Don't get irritated, be pleasant." After a week of near-panic among his advisers, the president predicted "a good day" and smiled a lot.

Meanwhile, in Texas—the leader of the Super Tuesday voting states—four out of seven said they wanted a wider choice of candidates. As the Tsongas and Clinton campaigns gained in confidence, it seemed unlikely that these wishes would be granted.

Today is known as Super Tuesday because seven years ago America's Southern Democrats grew tired of an electoral system in which the early Northern primary states picked liberals, trade unionists and members of ethnic minorities whose candidacies died in the deserts like crous-



es. They decided to hold a grand regional primary early in the year and, with marketing men's ambitions, they gave it the sobriquet "super".

However, it has proved impossible for candidates to appeal to Southern concerns in 20 states in two weeks. Few voters ever knew of the power their bosses had given them. The 1988 victory went to the man whose leadership in the Northern campaign gave him the money to buy Southern TV advertising—another liberal lamb to the sacrifice, Michael Dukakis.

Today is not quite so super a Tuesday. Eleven states are voting and only seven are Southern. Texas, whose leaders were foremost in promoting the original idea, is the biggest prize, followed by Florida, Missouri, Tennessee, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Mississippi.

A glance at the map shows immediately what the impact

for the Democrats is likely to be. The voting states form a circle around the home of the man whom the Southern political machines have already anointed. Arkansas's Governor Bill Clinton is almost as good as a local boy to his bigger neighbours. In Oklahoma, his rival, Paul Tsongas, could not even organise to get on the ballot and in Texas, at the choice is between an Arkansan and a New England Greek, the Southerner is "one of us".

If Mr Clinton can win decisively in Florida, the ambitions of those who designed Super Tuesday will have been fulfilled. But polls suggest that Mr Tsongas, vociferously trying today for only "the silver medal", may even win, and will at least survive for the next round of contests in Michigan and Illinois. Mr Tsongas is also expected to do well in other states which have hitched themselves to the Southern caravan, Delaware, Rhode Island, and his home state of Massachusetts.

Republicans had little control of the original "super" planning inside the Democrat-dominated legislatures. But they were happy to go along with it, foreseeing how a Southern battle between Northern liberals could drive conservative Democrats to switch parties.

Today, in the eight states holding Republican primaries, the president still benefits from the work put in by Lee Atwater, his late campaign strategist, four years ago. Although the boom is over and rivals Patrick Buchanan and David Duke are playing the race cards, Florida and Texas are secure, as are also Oklahoma and Tennessee.

But by the end of today's vote the calls from the White House for Mr Buchanan to withdraw will likely have risen to a scream.

But will he listen? Threats of humiliation or tacit promises of help for him in 1996 may not carry much weight. Mr Buchanan has the Civil War on his mind and he threatened this week to make California's primary on June 2 the "Antietam of the Republican party". This reference to the bloodiest battle ever fought on American soil will surely test Mr Bush's promise of pleasantness, however super tonight's result may be.

L & T section, page 5

## Tsongas's 'anti-candidacy' campaign pays off

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN MIAMI

IN 1983, Paul Eftymiou Tsongas, aged 42, was diagnosed to have lymph node cancer. He sought to ignore his illness but "when the time came for my check-up my doctor was shocked at my condition. The disease was voluminous in my body and about to consume me."

Mr Tsongas left the US Senate to spend precious time with his three young daughters. He endured chemotherapy, radiation and, finally, an excruciating bone marrow transplant, followed by six weeks in an enforced isolation. He survived, but had learnt that ignoring problems meant greater pain later. He grew up in Lowell, Massachusetts, helping in the family drycleaning business. He had watched the town die as its textile mills moved south, but as a congressman had led its revival by practically extorting public and private investments back in the private sector. He now saw America refusing to confront the cancer of diminishing

competitiveness. He felt he had been spared, he said, for a purpose.

He wrote an 86-page manifesto, called "A call to economic arms", donned his halo, and risked universal ridicule last April by declaring for president. He has since turned conventional political wisdom upside down. Armed with a single strong message—the regeneration of America's manufacturing base. This unlikely candidate has struck a rich lode in a country burnt by the excesses of the 1980s and wary of slick politi-

cians promising the earth. Even close aides sometimes appear bewildered by the success of a campaign they have dubbed The Magical Mystery Tour.

Tsongie-Bongie, as his school friends called him, breaks every rule in the book. He is so honest that he recently admitted he would have opposed the Gulf war even though his views were not on record. He has so little "presence" that security men have stopped him at his own rallies. The Massachusetts Greek adopts so many hair

shirt stances that commentators beg for "less Sparta, more Athens." He insists on eight hours sleep a night, while Bill Clinton campaigns 20 hours a day.

Mr Tsongas's anti-candidacy could, of course, be the ultimate in image creation. But, challenging a sitting president at the peak of his popularity did not suggest naked ambition. Even if Mr Tsongas's improbable campaign goes no further, he has shown that there is room for conviction, politics in America.

Some of the highest-paid brains in Hollywood. They poured \$45 million (£26 million) into what was supposed to be a heart-warming yarn about child abuse.

The film, called *Radio Flyer*, opened earlier this month to a shower of critical ridicule and it has now joined the list of Hollywood's monumental flops, along with *Heaven's Gate*, *Ishtar*, *Havana* and *The Bonfire of the Vanities*. As one executive who was involved in the production put it: "Even if this film worked, how do you get an audience? Deprived of any good reviews to boost their film, the distributors have now resorted to advertising which include remarks from experts in child abuse."

## Blacks sing sad song for Clinton

Jamie Dettmer reports from Tchula in Holmes County that times have changed in the Mississippi delta, but not that much

CRIES of small children in the congregation were drowned by the singing, a poignant mixture of forlornness and hope conjuring up all the unhappy history of blacks in the Deep South. "Someone is calling my name, oh my Lord. Someone is calling my name, oh yes Lord. What shall I do?"

Someone was indeed calling on the worshippers at Tchula's Good Hope Baptist church, a little weather-beaten white-board building at an isolated crossroads in the swampy land of the Mississippi Delta.

John Wesley, the church's senior deacon, stepped forward to read a message urging the congregation to vote for Bill Clinton in today's Democratic primary. The message was from Mike Espy, the state's only black congressman and the first black to represent Mississippi in the House of Representatives since the reconstruction period after the civil war.

Times have changed in Mississippi, for years the most backward, isolated and racially oppressive of the Southern states. The Ku Klux Klan still exists here, but hardly shows its hooded face. Colleagues and schools are integrated. More than 600 elected officials in Mississippi are black, more than any other state but Alabama.

Racial sentiment, although less extreme now, is still a factor in Mississippi politics and everyday life and occasionally an exhibits an extreme and ugly face. A month ago, a 24-year-old black shot dead a Panola County store owner after being pistol-whipped and told to "run, nigger run". Segregation still exists. The golf clubs around Jackson, the state capital, are white preserves. Few blacks have entered the clubhouses, which are generally decorated with old prints of Confederate soldiers and battles. Few blacks go to the handful of night clubs either. "Well, you know, they would rather be with their own kind," a white girl said.

Tchula, a one-road town marking the end of an area of wooded hills before the flat lands near the Mississippi river begin, epitomises the Delta. Poverty is above 50 per cent in some towns in the region and, in the Delta, infant mortality is high.

In Tchula, blacks, who are in a majority, live at one end of the town in small, loose-jointed rundown frame houses or ramshackle cabins. Few have indoor plumbing and their occupants are either on welfare or work as poorly paid labourers on white plantations or at the local catfish processing plant. The whites live at the other end of town in large, well built and well kept frame houses with wide rocking chair porches. They worship in a brick church.



Super cool: flying between Nashville, Tennessee, and Miami, Florida, on the presidential campaign trail, Democrat Paul Tsongas puts his feet up before polling begins in today's "Super Tuesday" primaries

## Slick Willie works blue-collar magic

BY MARTIN FLETCHER

TWO months ago Bill Clinton flew back to Arkansas from the campaign trail for the execution of a black man who had killed then turned his gun on himself, causing severe brain damage.

Some people contended that Governor Clinton proceeded with a controversial execution to establish tough-on-crime credentials for the presidential race. The charges were groundless, but it is a measure of how many perceive Mr Clinton that they were even raised.

He is "Slick Willie", the consummate politician, a tall clever man who holds a handshake in a crowd, looks his interlocutor in the eye, and for that instance makes him or her feel that they alone really matter.

As a 23-year-old Rhodes scholar at Oxford, he wrote a letter to an Army Reserve Recruiting Officer saying the single reason he wanted to be made available for the Vietnam draft again was to preserve his political viability.

Mr Clinton became America's youngest governor nine years later. He lost the job after one term, but regained it in 1982 and every two years since, and at 45 is America's most senior governor. In 1990 he promised not to run for president, but did so anyway.

Mr Clinton has since been battered by allegations of

draft evasion, adultery and last weekend of suspect business dealings. In no instance was there a clear-cut case against him, and he has battled on with grit and courage, but the charges reinforce an already suspect image.

Mr Clinton has built a solid record of achievement in Arkansas, particularly in education, and last year his peers judged him America's most effective governor. But measured against Paul Tsongas's single-mindedness, his flexibility can look dangerously like political opportunism.

At the outset Mr Clinton positioned himself as the Washington outsider and new-look moderate Democrat, but Mr Tsongas was the candidate with suburban, middle-class appeal. Mr Clinton instead began building the traditional Democratic coalition of minorities and blue-collar whites and has become his party's establishment candidate.

Mr Tsongas has exploited this perception, calling Mr Clinton "cynical and unprincipled" and suggesting "some people will do anything to get elected president." Mr Clinton is privately infuriated by Mr Tsongas's air of moral superiority.

In a normal year, against as improbable a candidate as Mr Tsongas, Mr Clinton could be home and dry, but this is not a normal year.

## Term limit on office upheld

Washington: The United States Supreme Court yesterday rejected a legal challenge to California's controversial term-limit law on state officials. The law, supported by President Bush, could be enacted in other states and perhaps even in Congress.

The measure, approved by California's voters in 1990, limits state assembly members to six years in office and others, including the governor and state senators, to eight years. There is growing resentment at how long legislators stay in office. (Reuters)

## Bogotá setback

Bogotá: Millions of Colombians stayed away from local elections despite President Gaviria's calls to repudiate violence by taking part. The low turnout boosted opposition chances of winning three of four key cities. (Reuters)

## Helmsley date

New York: A federal court judge has refused to delay resentencing Leona Helmsley, aged 72, the self-styled hotel queen, and will do so on March 18. The resentencing is in response to an appeal court ruling. (AP)

NEW YORK NOTEBOOK by Charles Bremner

## Gays challenge St Patrick's bigotry brigade

As sure as the first daffodils Apoke through the litter of Central Park, New York dons the green and starts fighting over St Patrick. Since the festival was Americanised by immigrants during the 19th century, rarely has March 17 passed without a squabble over the right to join the parade up Fifth Avenue.

In 1868, German bands were thrown out because they "could never awaken a responsive throb in the hearts or impart a spring to the step" of an Irishman. In the years after the second world war, the disputes revolved around suspected communists and the morality of acclaiming famous literary drunks and, more recently, members of the IRA. By the dawn of the "multicultural" 1990s, Celtic ancestry had long since been dropped as a credential for a spot in America's oldest and largest parade.

Mayors Edward Koch and David Dinkins, a Jew and a black respectively, have donned green sashes and joined the massed pipe bands of the Police Department, while thousands of New Yorkers become honorary Gaels and devote the day to consuming green-dyed beer.

Even the Empire State Building is bathed in green floodlighting for the week.

This year, however, the parade has landed in the courts, and the Ancient Order of Hibernians, which organises the parade, has threatened to call it off at the last minute. The order is incensed over a lawsuit brought by the city

the Catholic faith and that they are afraid of disruption by militant gay leprechauns. Last year, in support of this view, jeering spectators threw beer at Mr Dinkins when he marched with a small group of bannerless homosexuals.

The gays and the city say the parade is a public event and the Hibernians are a band of reactionary "homophobes". As Anne Maguire, a lesbian activist, put it: "We just want to show people that we are Irish and gay and we don't have six heads."

In a reversal of its customary role, the American Civil Liberties Union has joined the fray on the side of the Hibernians, on the ground that the homosexuals are infringing the citizen's constitutional right to bigotry. A city judge and a federal court have begun hearing the case and are expected to give their ruling by the end of this week.

In the film *The Producers*, Mel Brooks had fun with the idea of the most awful story-line imaginable: a light-hearted musical about Adolf Hitler. While that was a joke, Brooks's model appears to have been taken seriously by



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# Peace prize was just reward for Israel's hardline man of war



Moment of history: Begin embracing Arafat after they signed the Israeli-Egyptian pact

MENACHEM Begin, Israel's then prime minister, was awarded the Nobel peace prize jointly with Sadat, the Egyptian president of the day, after they signed a treaty in 1979. Yet, four years later, he resigned from public life after Israel invaded Lebanon. Since then he had lived as a virtual recluse.

Mr Begin towered over Israeli history in a way matched only by one of his predecessors, David Ben-Gurion. He was a militant Zionist and defender of Israeli interests. Yet he became a frail figure, especially after the death of his wife, Aliza, in 1982. No reason was ever given for his surprise decision to opt out of public life in September 1983, but observers had little doubt that her death and the spiralling Jewish death toll in the war in Lebanon had combined to tilt the balance of his mind.

Before the foundation of Israel in 1948, Begin's ruthless role in Irgun Zvai Leumi, the Jewish terrorist group, helped weaken British resolve; yet his statesmanlike dealings with Sadat between 1977 and 1979 enabled Israel to make its first and only peace treaty with an Arab state. Before his physical and mental decline, Begin was a formidable Knesset performer and an unflinching nationalist who stood up to those even more hardline than himself who were reluctant to abandon the occupied Sinai as the price of peace with Egypt.

Begin, much less military in bearing than most of his political colleagues, was wisely steamrollered into the 1982 invasion of Lebanon by General Ariel Sharon, his minister of defence and a man he looked on rather as he might a much-loved but wayward son. Although the

**Christopher Walker, who knew Menachem Begin well, examines the paradox of a leader with a terrorist past who made peace with a bitter foe**

Initiative was General Sharon's, Begin caught the full blast of the anti-war protesters, who mounted a telling round-the-clock vigil on the pavement outside his official Jerusalem residence, relentlessly adding every Jewish death to a macabre make-shift scoreboard.

Like Yitzhak Shamir, his successor, who helped lead the rival Stern Gang terrorist group, Begin was a staunch believer in Israel's historical right to rule over the occupied West Bank, which he always referred to as "Judea and Samaria". Although he was prepared to compromise over the Sinai, which did not have the same biblical connotations, there

is no reason to believe that he would have proved more yielding than Mr Shamir over the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, or even the Golan Heights which he annexed in 1981.

"I approve the annexation of the Golan Heights and that is still viable today. I am sure that this will not change," he said of the strategic Syrian territory in a rare radio interview a year ago.

Begin's hard line and his record as a Jewish fighter enabled him to come to an agreement with Sadat, a very different sort of man with whom he struck up an improbable first-name accord, and make it stick. Al-

though many in British politics and the forces still bitterly resent his bloody record during the time of the Palestine Mandate, he deserved his share of the 1978 peace prize for the Camp David accords alone.

But Israeli self-interest lay behind the treaty signed in 1979. Above all, the huge Egyptian military machine was neutralised which, according to many angry Egyptians, opened the door for the Lebanon adventure.

While Begin will be remembered chiefly for his contribution to Israel's external relations, his skills as a wheeler-dealer domestic politician should not be forgotten. As an Israeli of Ashkenazi (European) origin, he was able to harness the backing of the poorer Sephardis, those from the Middle East who are often referred to as the "have nots", who came to worship him.

"In many ways, he changed the face of the country, losing the old David against Goliath image and replacing it with a harsher outlook more akin to those of other Arab countries in the region," the late Ruth Cale, a former Jerusalem correspondent of *The Sunday Times*, said.

In 1977, after 29 years' continuous rule by the centre-left Labour party, Begin steered his ultra-right Likud to power, a position it still maintains. He was sensitive to American criticism, but little moved by the frequent attacks from liberal-minded Jewish intellectuals living in Europe whom he frequently called "self-hating Jews".

Christopher Walker was Jerusalem correspondent of *The Times*, 1979-85.

Funeral, page 1  
Obituary, page 17

## Fighting flares up in Croatia

# Belgrade rally calls for general strike

FROM TIM JUDAH IN BELGRADE AND ANNE McELVOY IN ZAGREB

THOUSANDS rallied in Belgrade yesterday demanding the resignation of Slobodan Milosevic, the Serbian president. Speakers called for restoration of the monarchy in Serbia and a general strike.

Addressing a crowd of more than 25,000, Vuk Draskovic, leader of the Serbian Renewal Movement, Serbia's biggest opposition party, accused the Socialist government of gambling and losing the gains of two centuries of Serbian history. "In one year we have lost all that we won in two Balkan wars and two world wars," he declared. "Let workers down their tools, students boycott lectures and children not go to school. If for a few days Serbia becomes a country of silence and immobility... then democracy would be saved."

Although the Belgrade demonstration drew a poor turnout, the opposition

claimed a political victory, saying that those who had come to the protest had "conquered fear". Before the rally, government ministers had denounced the opposition as "national traitors".

The demonstration in Belgrade took place as European Community talks resumed in Brussels in an attempt to find a solution to Yugoslav ethnic disputes. But the arrival in Yugoslavia of the head of the United Nations peacekeeping force was overshadowed at the weekend by the worst outbreak of violence in Croatia since a ceasefire came into force two months ago and by the rise of tensions inside Bosnia. In Brussels, representatives of Bosnia's Muslim, Serb and Croat groups were preparing yesterday to settle an anodyne list of general principles for the organisation of a new Bosnian state. The upsurge of fighting in

Croatia has spread fears that extreme factions on both sides in the conflict are taking their last chance to impede the deployment of the peace-keeping troops. Nine people died in an artillery attack on Osijek at the weekend and a further 24 were injured when the city's hospital and shopping centre were hit. Croatian sources claimed that the army had launched a big attack on Sunday night on the village of Nustar in eastern Slavonia's no-man's-land, and in the nearby village of Chepin a civilian was reported to have died in a mortar attack on the national guard's headquarters. Fighting spread on Sunday to the central front, with Belisce coming under sustained attack. An air alert, the first in several weeks, was sounded yesterday in the industrial city of Sisak.

The UN is due to begin sending in peacekeeping troops in groups of 300 from the end of this week. The main condition of the deployment remains a ceasefire stable enough to guarantee the safety of the blue helmets.

There are indications that several of the attacks, notably those in rural Slavonia, may have been provoked by local Croatian commanders who are unconvinced that UN intervention will be of benefit to the country. While President Tudjman basks in the glory of having secured recognition at the price of accepting the UN presence inside Croatia's borders, many people in the war zones believe that this is a useless gain without a commitment to retake lost territory — a strategy ruled out by the arrival of peacekeepers.

Milan Dedakovic, the commander of Vukovar until it fell into Serbian hands last November, said in Vienna at the weekend that the arrival of the UN would only confirm the "robbery of Croatia's territory", a third of which is now controlled by Serb-led forces. He appealed to Croats to "fight on to liberate your homeland". Mr Dedakovic, although in disgrace after his quarrel with Dr Tudjman, still commands considerable support in Slavonia.

On the other side, Serb irregulars do not consider their task complete until Osijek is in their hands, and do not share the Belgrade government's enthusiasm for the deployment. Osijek's residents, who had begun to return to normal life in the relative peace since the beginning of the year, were yesterday preparing for a return to their shelters.

Letters, page 15



Catwalk clash: the glamour and sophistication of Gianfranco Ferré's design, left, was starkly contrasted by Byblos's ethnically inspired Argentine folkloric outfit at this week's autumn-winter Milan fashion show



# Yeltsin threatens to bypass parliament

FROM MARY DEJEVSKY IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT Yeltsin and his reform lobby in parliament where they cannot easily win. A television address by Mr Yeltsin would ensure the document received public support.

Once the voters had given their approval, Mr Yeltsin, operating under the new constitution, would be able to dissolve parliament and call new elections. Many of the current deputies, elected nearly two years ago, would lose their seats.

There would also be fewer seats altogether. Under the proposed new constitution, the congress, from which dep-

uties are selected to serve in rotation, would cease to exist. The new parliament would be directly elected and would comprise two chambers — the State Duma and the Federal Assembly.

The proposal for a referendum may be designed to frighten opponents of the document into voting for it at the congress despite their misgivings. A package of "transitional provisions" ensures that current deputies would keep their mandate (and privileges) until it expires, and that the members of the restructured parliament

would be selected from existing deputies. Considerations of job security alone could persuade deputies that approval of the document is the lesser of two evils.

The new constitution emphasises the primacy of human rights and changes the relationship between the executive and legislative branches of power in favour of the executive. The president is given the right to call an election if parliament defeats the government, rather than tolerate a new government which would be nominated by parliament.

# Blast kills Georgia policemen

BY BRUCE CLARK IN TBILISI AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

AN EXPLOSION at a government building in western Georgia yesterday killed three policemen and injured several others. Tass reported. The explosion was followed by street fighting in the town of Zugdidi, where Zviad Gamsakhurdia, Georgia's ousted president, still enjoys considerable support.

The blast occurred two days after Eduard Shevardnadze, the former Soviet foreign minister, returned to his native Georgia to help map out its future after a month-long civil war. The explosion

appeared to be a sign of protest against his arrival in the republic.

Tass said the explosion occurred in an interior ministry building in the town. It added that supporters of Mr Gamsakhurdia were responsible, without elaborating. "As of 3pm, battles were still continuing in Zugdidi," the agency said. "Four helicopters were sent in from Tbilisi to reinforce national guardsmen."

Zugdidi is the political heartland of Mr Gamsakhurdia and resentment against Mr Shevardnadze

runs particularly high among its inhabitants. Zugdidi was the springboard for Mr Gamsakhurdia's failed attempt to regain power in January after being ousted from power in an armed revolt that left much of Tbilisi in ruins.

Mr Shevardnadze continued his consultations with political leaders in Tbilisi which are widely expected to lead to the holding of early elections. He said he had not yet decided what role he could play in Georgia. He categorically denied any presidential ambitions.

# Film reopens the wounds of defeat

FROM PHILIP JACOBSON IN PARIS

When Vietnamese troops overran the last French stronghold in Dien Bien Phu almost 40 years ago, Pierre Schoendoerfer used his last reel of film to record it.

An army cameraman, he had parachuted into the doomed position as the final offensive began. In the next 57 days he filmed the unceasing battle from the waterlogged trenches alongside soldiers who knew the situation was hopeless yet still fought on. None of his original footage survived his capture and gruelling stint as a prisoner of war, but his determination to record the events he witnessed never wavered.

Now his film about a defeat that signalled the end of France's colonial empire in Indo-China has opened in Paris and seems certain to become a box-office success.

As a testament to what it was like fighting and dying in the dingy mud and squalor of the monsoon season, *Dien Bien Phu* works impressively. The images of heroism, suffering and death that M. Schoendoerfer first filmed with his Bell & Howell movie camera, then retained in his head

for all those years, are dramatically transferred to the big screen.

The film's impact is greatly enhanced by the fact that was shot on location in Vietnam, with the enthusiastic assistance of the authorities and, by the look of it, the Vietnamese army.

The battle was painstakingly restaged in terrain virtually identical to the original site, a shallow basin dominated by high ground that the Vietnamese forces, led by the legendary General Giap, hammered with heavy artillery. Dien Bien Phu was defended by about 15,000 troops, all regulars from France and its African colonies, including elite Foreign Legion and paratrooper formations.

Some 10,000 of them were taken prisoner, almost half of them suffering wounds. Disease and terrible hardship in the POW camps was to kill 70 per cent of those who survived the battle. Wisely, perhaps, M. Schoendoerfer's film does not really attempt to explain why the French were ever ordered to stand and fight in a position of no strategic value that was impossible to defend.

# Lombardy cheers the irresistible rise of Umberto Bossi

UMBERTO Bossi, the leader of the Lombardy League, has begun his general election campaign by offering northern Italians a "new Risorgimento" to liberate them from "the thieves of Rome", as the Christian Democrat party accused him of seeking to dismantle the country.

Hundreds of portly businessmen and their wives in furs leapt to their feet chanting "Bravo, Bossi, bravo!" when the senator held his first campaign meeting for the contest on April 5, at Varese in the foothills of the Alps.

"The north is ready to go into Europe," Signor Bossi thundered from the rostrum. "We always have been in Europe. We have fewer state

Thanks to demagogues like Umberto Bossi, devotion seems a fine option for some of Italy's regions as voters prepare to go to the polls next month. John Phillips writes from Rome

industries, and that means fewer mafiosi. The south is not ready."

In repose, Signor Bossi, aged 50, looked deceptively like a schoolmaster in his tweed jacket, khaki serge trousers and brown zip-up boots. But his oratory electrified the crowd.

"What is needed is a new Risorgimento, a Risorgimen-

to of federalism," he said, shaking his fist as his burly bodyguards watched entranced. "It is finished for the thieves of Rome."

Signor Bossi's rhetoric was not lost on Angelo Alipio, who owns a small textiles firm that has been badly hurt by the recession. "In Rome, people live well," he snorted. "They have government jobs and work only six hours a day. Foreign competition from the Third World is terrible here. The south does not pay as many taxes as we do."

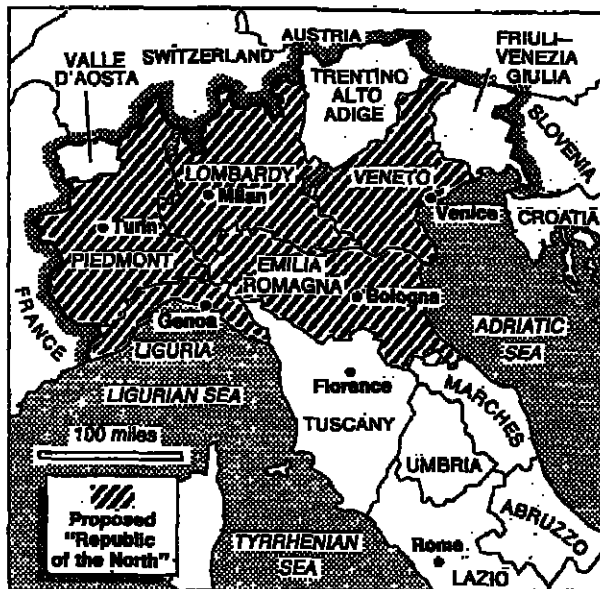
"Mafia gangsters are paid to stay in hotels in the north," he adds. "They demand bribes and deal in drugs." Restoring law and order through "northern justice" is

part of the platform of the Northern League to build a "republic of the north" in Lombardy, Liguria, Piedmont, the Veneto and Emilia Romagna.

Parallel leagues have sprung up in the rest of Italy to try to establish republics of the centre and south. The republics would gather taxes and decide industrial policy. Defence and foreign policy would remain national.

Signor Bossi flatly accuses the traditional parties of protecting organised crime. "The little mafioso is born in Piazza del Gesù," he says, referring to the Roman square where the Christian Democrats have their headquarters.

Leading article, page 15





## Woodrow Wyatt

This election does not seem a watershed like 1945 and 1979

The Tories won Aston, Birmingham, with large majorities in 1931 and 1935. They were confident of holding it in 1945. I was a 26-year-old brash Labour candidate flown back from India. I had little expectation of winning, but it was a diversion from the army, which I joined just before the war. Lozels, one of three wards, was known as "kippers and curtains". It was the only area with residents prosperous enough to have patterned white curtains in their windows and kippers regularly for high tea. It looked gloomily unenthusiastic, with hardly a Labour poster. But the scent of the changing mood was rising above the kippers, and gradually Lozels windows began to show as many Labour posters as Conservative. Something stirring was in the offing. It was the dramatic arrival of Labour's first, and large, overall majority, carrying me with it.

John Freeman, young and handsome, in his Rifle Brigade major's uniform, was Mover of the Address in reply to the Gracious Speech. "Today may rightly be regarded as 'D-Day' in the battle of the new Britain." The earth had moved. The welfare state was born, altering the nature of society.

Nationalisation began in the idealistic hope that industries would work better without a profit-motive, but collapsed when human nature resented itself to prove the opposite. I guessed correctly that my seat at Bosworth was vanishing in 1970 when miners objected bitterly to high Labour taxation and their brass band played at a fête held in the grounds of a rich Conservative.

After 1945, it did not matter greatly which side won. Both the main parties were resigned to steady decline and were chiefly concerned with presenting alternative schemes for making the descent gently tolerable. But an election with as much impact as 1945 came in 1979. James Callaghan, Labour's leader, commented that he had felt a change of mood which could not be resisted. The Thatcher revolution started and, as with 1945, Britain was never to be quite the same again. A new vigour and a stronger pulse gave us the self-fulfilling confidence to believe Britain was not down and out but up and coming.

Will 1992 be as dynamic as 1945 or 1979? Is there an overwhelming instinct for change, which politicians encourage or resist, but which will relentlessly decide the result, whether statistics or instincts they had at each other? If so, much of the forward drive of Thatcherism will be halted and reversed as the ship of state lists in the doldrums again until the crew is sated with debilitating years of inaction and longs to be on the move. There are discontents, complaints and pessimism about the steering in exceptionally difficult international economic waters. But I do not feel they equal the mood of change in 1945 and 1979. The prime minister is unlikely to change after the 10 per cent or so of the electorate who have yet to decide have had time to contemplate the alternative. Nor do I believe the fashionable theory that there will be a hung parliament.

Recently I met a young Swede with a Swedish law degree who is at Essex University to get additional qualifications in European Community law. He would have much preferred Oxford or Cambridge, but they still refuse to give degrees involving knowledge of the laws emanating from Brussels and the manner in which they are made. Mr Major should now make a feature of explaining why he would be better than Mr Kinnock at influencing our new Brussels overlords and exploiting their laws to our advantage. This, and Mr Kinnock's replies, would lift the campaign above kippers and curtains.

The female sex is not a minority and should be treated as real people, just like men, writes Janet Daley

## A race of invisible women



Missing person: Today's Sue MacGregor

cast them as some sort of outlandish fringe group, ought to strike us as absurd. Women do not have a "role to play in society", they are society, just as men are. Once accepted, this understanding of the absolutely mundane nature of being a woman could revolutionise sexual equality.

When you think of it, almost all of women's problems arise because they are not regarded (and do not regard themselves) as real people. They are ignored, abused and devalued, not because they are female but because they are invisible. When Sue MacGregor lost control of a Radio 4 discussion, it was widely believed that boisterous male politicians had taken advantage of her feminine weakness. I would venture instead that they were not taking advantage of her: they simply forgot that she existed. Once the heat of the moment had overwhelmed them, Sue MacGregor

simply evaporated. In the way that women get down to the business at hand.

Women at work are so widely assumed to be in mental or supporting roles that they merge into the background as an anonymous presence, identifiable only as adjuncts of the real people for whom they work. Meetings of men are served by legions of women distributing minutes and taking shorthand notes. We see a clutch of dignitaries enter some international meeting and automatically identify the men in the party as the true participants. If there are women in the group, they

are merely assistants. As often as not, women following behind their bosses at official gatherings are not even introduced (even if course would be unpardonably rude if they were real people). A woman designer I know told me that when her boss brings visitors into the studio, he introduces them to all the men in the room but not to her. This is not, I am convinced, meant to insult her. So far as he is concerned, there are several people in the room and one woman.

Self-effacing invisibility in public combined with sympathetic support in private is the ideal helpmeet face of the working woman. And therein lies the explanation of why more women do not get to the top in professional life. Women who "get on" in hierarchical institutions are the sort of women whom men like to work with. And what men want from women at work is support, flattery (not necessarily in the crude sense — just an acknowledgement of their unquestioned authority) and the kind of competent perceptiveness that oils the wheels of office life. More than anything, perhaps, they want women who are prepared whenever necessary to cease to exist.

Which is to say, women who will not insist on intruding their egos, who will not demand to be noticed. Since it is precisely their lack of obtrusiveness which makes them attractive to male employers, the sort of women who survive the hurdles of working life

are the least likely to make it to the highest levels. Either they are temperamentally disinclined to aim so high (hence the myth of female lack of ambition) or they have become so adept at concealing their competitiveness that they cannot kick the habit. The kinds of trait which would earn a young man a reputation for having the right stuff for promotion would put a woman out on her ear at the earliest stages of her career.

There are plenty of women who are gritty and assertive: after all, whatever happens to all those domineering head prefects who emerge from the more robust girls' schools? The answer is that they tend not to do very well in the institutions where men choose which women to employ (which is why many of them stay on in female education and grow up to be headmistresses). Strong, self-willed women get weeded out early on in the race.

We need constantly to be reminded not that we are women with special disadvantages, but that we are people with the same needs as everybody else.

## Who pulls the Chancellor's strings?

The real puppetmasters behind today's Budget are hidden in the Treasury, says Anatole Kaletsky

If today's Budget proves a damp squib, as now seems all too likely, the government will probably lose the general election. In that case, the stewardship of the Treasury by Norman Lamont, John Major and Nigel Lawson will go down in history as the most remarkable episode of economic and political mismanagement since the second world war. It is still possible, however, that the Budget will help to win the election, with long-term promises of lower taxes, new saving schemes and help for industry and homeowners. If so, Mr Lamont will be hailed as a brilliant Chancellor and saviour of the Conservative party.

One thing is certain. The process of choosing scapegoats or of deification will be completely unfair. For what has been truly remarkable about the five years of economic management since the 1987 election has not been the Lawson-Major-Lamont record of running the Treasury, but the Treasury's record of running Messrs Lawson, Major and Lamont.

The Treasury has had a long history of discreetly dominating British governments, stretching back even before Gladstone invented the theatre of the Budget speech (it was he who created the illusion that the Treasury is run by politicians rather than civil servants). Rarely, however, have individual members enjoyed as much influence as in the past five years. If responsibility is to be apportioned for the management of the economy by Mrs Thatcher and John Major's governments, then Sir Terence Burns, the chief economic adviser from 1979 to 1991 and permanent secretary since then, must take the lion's share of the praise or blame.

"There was only one person in the world whose opinion Lawson cared about: Terry Burns," says a top government official who watched helplessly in 1988 as Nigel Lawson cut interest rates and then unleashed his tax cuts

on the overheating economy, casually ignoring all warnings from inside and outside the government. In particular, it was Sir Terry who devised a long series of arguments to justify Mr Lawson's abandonment of successive monetary and fiscal targets. Above all, he reassured Mr Lawson (and subsequently his two successors) that the Chancellor's sole macroeconomic duty was to control inflation, and that this could be achieved most effectively and least painfully by attaching the British economy to a kind of auto-pilot, culminating in Britain's membership of the ERM.

Although the precise policies recommended by Sir Terry varied widely during the Lawson period, one theme ran through them all. As one of Mr Lawson's close confidantes during this period notes, "He told the Chancellor what he wanted to hear. Whatever Nigel was bent on doing, Terry would find an intellectual justification."

Ironically it was not until the collapse of the Lawson boom that Sir Terry's power peaked. Once Mr Lawson was replaced as Chancellor by Mr Major, the Treasury's role was transformed. Instead of finding justifications for Mr Lawson's preconceived ideas and backing him in his disputes with Mrs Thatcher at Number 10, the mandarins now worked for a man who had few detailed notions of his own about running the economy, but who enjoyed strong support from the prime minister. If only because she could not afford to lose another Chancellor, Sir Terry also enjoyed an excellent personal rapport with Mr Major, sharing not only his hatred of snobbery and unpretentious manner, but also his passion for sport.

From October 1989 onwards, the power of the Treasury mandarins waxed steadily as they manoeuvred the Chancellor into ever-stronger commitments to ERM membership and finally achieved their goal of pushing Mrs Thatcher into the ERM in October



Illusionist: Gladstone invented the Budget speech, but real power lies with civil servants

1990. This commitment might have seemed to be Sir Terry's apotheosis, but with Mr Major's elevation to prime minister a month later, his stature grew to a previously undreamt-of degree.

In Norman Lamont, the Treasury now had a boss politically much weaker than Mr Major, while Sir Terry had a direct line to Number 10. After his appointment as permanent secretary, Sir

Terry imported Alan Budd, formerly his closest colleague at London Business School, to be the new economic adviser, while Mr Lamont appointed Bill Robinson, another former LBS col-

league, as his political adviser (in theory his chief source of independent economic views).

The grim story of Mr Lamont's tenure as Chancellor is too familiar to need repetition. Suffice it to say that Treasury's hand has been visible behind the key economic and political developments of the past 18 months: the over-optimistic economic forecasts throughout the recession, the painfully slow reductions in interest rates, the blows to the housing and car industries in the 1990 budget, the failure to cut interest rates last summer when the pound was riding high in the ERM. Even the decision not to call a general election last autumn was heavily influenced by the Treasury's confident forecasts of an economic recovery before Christmas.

Which brings us back to the pre-election Budget. When the recession deepened unexpectedly in the winter, there was still time for the Chancellor to restore confidence before the election. Even if he could not cut interest rates, he could have brought forward help for investment, the car industry and housing, instead of waiting for today's Budget. He could even have brought forward the Budget or promised in advance to cut taxes so as to boost confidence. If the prime minister had put off the election until July, voters might well have seen the benefits of such measures before polling day. By last October, however, the Treasury had convinced the Chancellor and prime minister that it was already too late to stimulate the economy, either through tax-cuts or lower interest rates before polling day.

As a result, the Chancellor allowed himself to appear impotent in the face of recession. The prime minister boxed himself into an April election. And the Budget presented this afternoon will have no more significance than any other wish-list from the Conservative manifesto. Judging by the opinion polls, it may even have less chance of enactment than Labour's alternative budget which will be presented by John Smith next week. If so, Sir Terry will be on hand to do Mr Smith's bidding from April 10.

## ...and moreover CRAIG BROWN

Nostalgia is a mad dog on a lead, forever tugging one back to nooks one deserted long ago. With the election approaching, I am feeling the tug.

Five years ago, I was *The Times*' election sketchwriter. At the time, I was in a frenzy of panic, mainly over travel arrangements, zipping from Cyril Smith in Rochdale one day to Roy Jenkins in Glasgow the next, and then to Belfast for Ian Paisley in the morning and Gerry Adams in the afternoon, and on to Leeds the next day for Denis Healey. It was my first and only experience of proper, or at least semi-proper reporting. I came away feeling that all news reports should be followed in italics by a full description of the difficulties of the job in hand. ("The above item was written in half an hour on a railway platform while the reporter was surrounded by three drunks, 50-rate commuters and a Salvation Army Band. It was phoned from a call-box while a queue of ten stamped its feet. The copy-taker didn't laugh once, interrupting only to say 'Is there much more of this?' when there were still 15 paragraphs to go.")

But panic is not an emotion that lodges long in the memory. It knows to disguise itself as excitement, in the hope of being revived by nostalgia. I now find myself yearning to watch again as the politicians perform their loopy jigs for the indifferent crowds, as their major pronouncements and outright condemnations are all forced to make

way for complaints about dog messes on the pavement.

I remember going around Chesterfield with Tony Benn for an afternoon during the last election. He was as keen as mustard to talk to his constituents about the future of the NHS and disarmament, but the longest conversation he had was with a woman who was distressed by a small amount of grass growing between the paving stones outside her house. "I could easily take a tumble," she argued. Mr Benn puffed on his pipe, jangled the change in his pocket, looked hard at the nits and said, "I wonder if weedkiller might do the trick?" But the lady wasn't to be bought off so easily; she had already tried Domestos. She said, and it hadn't done any good at all. Polite to the end, Mr Benn said that he believed that these days there were liquids designed specifically for killing weeds rather than just household germs, and perhaps she could give one of them a go.

All afternoon, he wanted to tackle world issues, but every-one else dwelt upon local irritations. The best he could hope for was a call for the revival of capital punishment. But he is an optimist. At the end of the afternoon, when I asked him how it had gone he said that he "was delighted that so many people came up to me and said, 'Isn't there a chance of peace in the Gorbachev disarmament proposals?'" Yet I had been with him all the time, and I hadn't heard anyone say anything of the sort. It is this disparity

between the lofty notions of politicians and the nagging grumble of their constituents that makes elections so comical.

Some commentators view the advent of the "photo opportunity" as an indication that politicians are calling the tune. But anyone who watched Mrs Thatcher in 1987 as she struggled to stay smiling while watching six lock-lift trucks prosaically tow a Strauss waltz will know otherwise. The photo-op has become a Frankenstein's monster, forcing its creators into ever more unnatural positions to amuse the public.

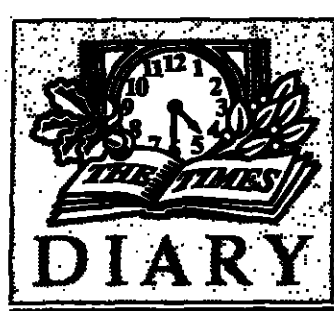
One thing that surprised me during the last election was the complete indifference of most people in the street towards the presence of even very famous politicians, unless they were performing tricks. Most journalists, including me, get quite a kick from rubbing shoulders with cabinet ministers and party leaders, but the same is not true of the public. I have watched in amazement as passers-by have darted into doorways to avoid the touch of the outstretched hand of Michael Heseltine, and I have stood in the pouring rain outside a Glasgow supermarket with Roy Jenkins as he struggled to buttonhole anyone at all for a few words. After a play of this, Jenkins's only reward was to lose his seat. And perhaps this is what makes me yearn to cover another campaign: however irksome it is for the journalist, the utter misery it holds for the politician is a joy to behold.

## Basement briefs

THE secrets of the Chancellor's budget speech are not quite so secret after all. By the time Norman Lamont stands up to deliver his speech this afternoon, more than 40 people will have already read the full contents of the Chancellor's battered briefcase.

Lamont finished work on the final draft in the Treasury early yesterday evening, after which it was taken for security to the Treasury's own rudimentary printer in the basement, rather than HMSO's more sophisticated presses. Overnight, 1,100 copies were run off, to be distributed the minute the Chancellor sits down. Copies of the speech remained under lock and key at the Treasury last night, and will not travel the short distance to the Commons under the "strict guardianship" of civil servants until just before Lamont stands up. Advance copies were given to the cabinet in time for its meeting this morning. But by the time other aides, civil servants, private secretaries and the printers themselves have read the speech, the number begins to approach the half-century.

Much to the irritation of MPs, who have first to wait until Lamont has sat down and then to queue for their copies, the press corps at the Commons will receive the speech on a page by page basis while the Chancellor is on his feet. The moment Lamont finishes, a hazard of leather-clad motorcycle dispatch riders will roar off from the Treasury to various City firms with verbatim transcripts. The Treasury's own printer has saved the Chancellor some embarrassment. Even while Lamont is speaking, the HMSO printing presses deep in the bowels of the Commons should be running off



thousands of explanatory leaflets for the general public, but yesterday, by coincidence, HMSO civil servants began industrial action in protest against a 4.7 per cent pay offer. Eddie Spence, the union spokesman, says: "Without our goodwill, the Budget material will not go out on time. Our goodwill has been withdrawn."

Now we know why British Telecom hired Maureen Lipman to rabbit away in its Beattie adverts: she is a real-life telephone addict. The star of the long-running series of adverts for a near-monopoly admits that she has no fewer than 12 telephones dotted around her own house. She even has one of Giles Gilbert Scott's famous red kiosks at the bottom of the garden.

## Jug jug to dirty ears

THAT other Stormin' Norman, the one who saw off the Iraqis, appears to have met his match in the Potteries. General Schwarzkopf has failed to prevent a Stoke firm manufacturing a Toby jug bearing his features. If the jugs were not withdrawn, his lawyers threatened, hostilities would commence. Undaunted, Kevin Pearson, the manufacturer, fired back a Scud of his own. "We told him that we had been making Toby

jugs for 250 years. We have made mugs of generals going back to Waterloo and have even made one of General Patton. We agreed to stop sales in America, but said we would carry on selling the jug in Britain." Schwarzkopf agreed to a ceasefire, although Toby jugs continue to penetrate deep behind enemy lines.

## Sacks race

THE CHIEF RABBI, Dr Jonathan Sacks, has taken to pounding the streets every morning before he starts work. There is only one problem: while the young-at-heart 44-year-old burns up the streets, his burly bodyguard, eight years his junior, cannot stand the pace. Sacks, who has placed on his desk

course by his boss, who has become known among his admiring staff as the Rapid Rabbi.

April 9, it seems, is a big day not only for John Major but for his wife, Norma. It will be 22 years to the day since the pair met for the first time on G.L.C. polling day in the Tory office in Brixton Road. "I shouldn't think either of them even remembers," says Peter Golds, who as secretary of Brixton's Young Tories introduced them. For the record, the Tories retained control of the G.L.C., but with a greatly reduced majority.

## Infantile correctness

DOES the Commonwealth still matter, its citizens around the world asked yesterday? At London's Commonwealth Institute, more than a thousand pre-pubescent members of the Queen's dominions, territories and protectorates, who had gathered to mark Commonwealth Day, were unsure. Indeed, harmony of nations was hardly the order of the day, as a potentially nasty scene developed between Her Majesty's young and loyal subjects and a group of visiting American children. "Are you coming back to the Commonwealth?" Stephen Cox, the Institute's new director, jokingly asked the American party.

That was the cue for politically correct British children, all under 11, to stage their protest. Every time the American kids appeared with their pictures of Columbus, the mother country's rising generation decided to boo heartily. "Five hundred years of exploration, five hundred years of exploitation," rapped the kids, in sympathy with the race whom we used to call Indians but who are now known as native Americans. Someone must have put them up to it. No one yesterday was owning up.



a sign saying "Daily jogging leads to positive thinking and goal achievement", proudly manages three miles every morning without breaking into a sweat. His bodyguard is struggling to keep up with his charge as he puffs and pants several yards behind. He has now been sent on a fitness



## Economic ordeal for India

## Rao survives reform test

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DELHI

INDIA'S minority government survived its first big parliamentary test yesterday as it promised to press ahead with the most far-reaching economic reforms since independence. Even in its own camp there is nervousness that the government is burying socialism so hastily.

A challenge by opposition parties provided a sharp reminder that the government could be brought down at any time. In the end, backed by small parties and independents, it won a comfortable majority in the Lok Sabha (lower house). The victory had been carefully worked out in advance by its opponents, who were anxious to avoid forcing the country into another general election.

But the challenge has

heightened political uncertainty, which could undermine the immediate impact of the reforms, designed to encourage international investment and free India from economic isolation. P.V. Narasimha Rao, the prime minister, had warned members that he would resign if he lost the vote.

While that would not necessarily have precipitated an election, it would have certainly shattered investors' confidence. Mr Rao expressed exasperation that "a few seats here or there" could determine his survival. Such tension was not good for India's image abroad.

The vote was in response to President Venkataraman's address, normally a routine affair setting out the government's programme for the coming parliamentary session. The right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party, the biggest opposition group, said it voted against the Congress (I) government over its failure to control prices and unemployment. Left-of-centre parties said they were protesting about the ideological shift in Indian policy.

The real aim of both groups was to distance themselves publicly from unpopular reforms that most of them privately admit are unavoidable. Economic analysts say it could take three years for the benefits to be felt, but poverty has already started to increase, leading to political unrest in many states.

Many more painful decisions have yet to be taken. Manmohan Singh, the finance minister, plans a concerted attack on subsidies and a big range of supports to state-owned industries which will severely test a government that survives at the best of unpredictable allies.

● **Back again:** Coca-Cola, which shut down its operations in India in 1978, is to return under the Rao government's liberalised economic policies. (AP)

China, the last big power not to sign the treaty, had come under pressure to do so from the United Nations and



Winning team: a Sikh farmer whipping his pair of bullocks to victory in a traditional race in the Indian state of Punjab. The bullock contest is a highlight of the annual three-day "rural Olympics" held just before harvest-time in the small village of Kila Raipur

## Peking joins the anti-nuclear pact

BY MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

CHINA formally acceded to the nuclear non-proliferation treaty yesterday. Qian Qichen, the foreign minister, handed over the articles of accession to John Major at talks in Downing Street and promised to work for nuclear disarmament and prevent the spread of nuclear weapons.

Mr Qian, visiting London for talks on Hong Kong and world affairs, said the move was a "major step" towards the prohibition and destruction of nuclear weapons. The prime minister called the accession an "immensely important step".

China, the last big power not to sign the treaty, had come under pressure to do so from the United Nations and

## Waiter gets tip from the top

A Pensacola waiter who served President Bush and his wife, Barbara, has received a belated but generous tip. The Bushes ate at Skopelos seafood and steak restaurant during a campaign stop. The restaurant picked up the bill for their food, and the president left without tipping waiter Tracey Yancey, the *Pensacola News Journal* reported. After learning of his omission, Mr Bush had Secret Service agents deliver the tip with handwritten notes to the restaurant's owners. Co-owner Gus P. Silvos wouldn't say how much was sent. "It was generous," Mr Silvos said.

George Cole, the star of *Minder* who likes to give the impression that there

are no flies on him, has had to eat his words while filming in outback Australia. The actor has been so annoyed by flies that he has vowed never to return. "It's my first time here and my last because of the flies," he said while shooting a scene near Broken Hill in New South Wales.

The Bishop of Manchester, the Rt Rev Stanley Booth-Clibborn, aged 67, suffered a slight stroke after a heart by-pass operation three days ago, according to a church spokesman yesterday. Wythenshawe hospital described the bishop's condition as "stable". He is due to retire in November.

Former President Reagan and his wife, Nancy, have renewed their marriage vows in a family celebration of their 40th wedding anniversary.

Mieke Officiers, who has never served in parliament or government office, was called off the Austrian ski slopes at the weekend and given 30 minutes to decide whether to accept the job of budget minister in a new centre-left Belgian coalition. "It was a complete surprise. There had been no contact before we left for Austria," Officiers said. The new minister, aged 39, was director of the Flemish employers' federation and is a technical budget expert. Her main job will be to cut the budget deficit.

## Poll defeat weakens Miyazawa

Tokyo: The ruling Liberal Democratic party's defeat by the Japan Trade Union Confederation (Rengo-Kai) in a by-election in Miyagi prefecture on Sunday has dealt a severe blow to the shaky administration of Kiichi Miyazawa, the prime minister (Joanna Pitman writes). A humiliating defeat for the party in the important upper house election in July now seems likely.

Mr Miyazawa has been embroiled in a tangle of corruption scandals since he took office last November.

## Township toll rises to 30

Johannesburg: Four more people were killed in fighting between blacks in Alexandra township, Johannesburg, taking the death toll to at least 30 in three days.

Tension has been high since two people were shot at an Inkatha Freedom party funeral on Saturday. Seven blacks died in Malagazi near Durban, where virtual civil war between Inkatha and African National Congress supporters started seven years ago. (Reuters)

## Sleep of death

Bangkok: Survivors of a ferry disaster in which 89 people died claim that a sleepy helmsman failed to hear warning hoots from a giant oil tanker seconds before it sliced through the cramped passenger vessel. (Reuters)

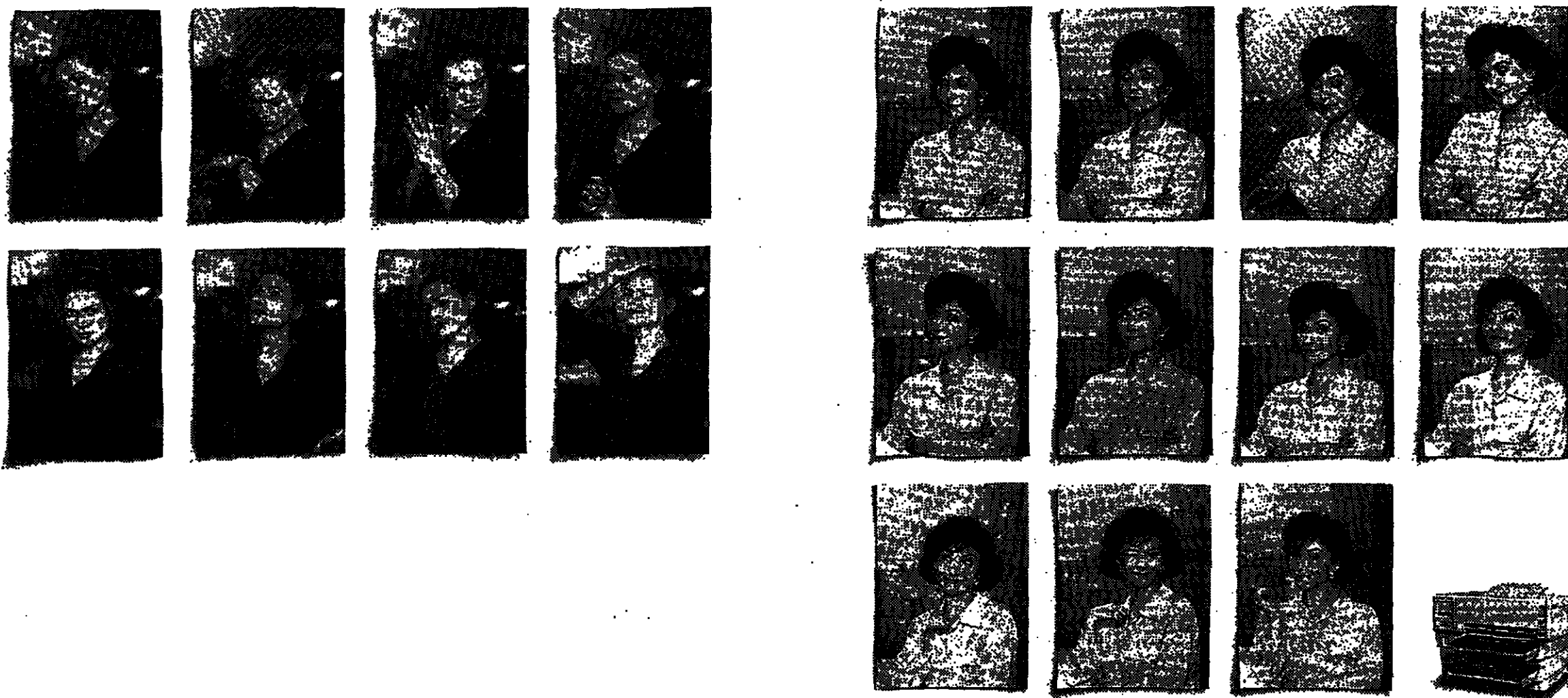
## Timor blockade

Jakarta: Indonesia mobilised nine frigates in the Timor Sea to intercept a Portuguese peace boat crewed by activists wanting to lay wreaths in a Dili cemetery to commemorate killings there by Indonesian troops. (AFP)

## Unhappy hour

Wellington: Live goldfish cocktails at £3 have caused a furore in New Zealand. The Route 66 bar here has sold more than 100 "Goldfish Laybacks" — tequila, lemon juice and a small Chinese carp — since Friday. (Reuters)

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## AID FOR MAXWELL'S VICTIMS

Frauds, like accidents, will always happen. When they do, two questions fall to be answered. What should be done to minimise the chance of them happening again? And what if anything should be done to help their victims?

Yesterday's report from the Commons all-party social security select committee into pension funds in the wake of the Maxwell debacle is more successful in answering the first than the second of these questions. Its plan to fill the legal vacuum exposed by Mr Maxwell's fraud must be picked up by the next government of whatever colour. But as for compensating the Maxwell losers, the report refuses to say whether or not the government should pay.

The committee reveals little new about the shortcomings of the regulation of company pension schemes. Pension funds have been used to keep up the share price of parent companies, a loophole only partly blocked by new government regulation limiting future investment in related companies to 5 per cent of their assets. Trustees' responsibilities have been ill defined and their powers limited. Trust law is an outdated concept for the regulation of wealth on this scale.

The way the Investment Management Regulatory Organisation (Imro) has exercised its powers has been "completely inadequate". As the committee acidly observes: "Pontius Pilate would have blushed at the spectacle of so many witnesses washing their hands in public before the committee of their responsibilities in this affair." These are sensible though not original criticisms. The committee advocates a rapid official enquiry to recommend new laws.

However swift such an enquiry it will do nothing to help Mr Maxwell's pensioners. The 8,000 pensioners who worked for companies outside Mirror Group Newspapers will receive no more than the minimum pension guaranteed by the state. Mirror Group Newspapers recognises at present a responsibility to pay its existing and future pensioners, though the black hole in its funds blights the prospect of finding a

suitable buyer for the company. The committee's answer is for the incoming government to put "maximum moral, political and legal pressure" on those who failed in their regulatory duties to make up the shortfall. Auditors, Mr Maxwell's financial advisers and the banks who lent him so freely would all, on this basis, be pressed by the government to pay up.

This is an appealing suggestion; but it suffers from three serious defects. First, some of those most seriously at fault, including Imro, could not afford to make realistic contributions. Second, the moral, political and legal pressure would be coming from a government whose failure to establish a proper system for the regulation of pension funds is largely responsible for the mess. Third, a protracted squabble would be in prospect as to degrees of culpability and appropriate penalties, during which the pensioners would get nothing.

The bulk of the blame, in the case of the Barlow Clowes affair, the government compensated some losers even though, in their greed for high returns, those investors were in part responsible for their fate. In the Maxwell affair, it would be quite unjust to blame the pensioners, who had no choice but to invest in Mr Maxwell's scheme. They are victims of an accident rather than an error of speculation.

The question is, who should pay for the accident? The government is in some measure at fault for allowing that accident to take place, but it was a sin of omission. Lloyd's names might feel similarly neglected by government regulators. The most that can realistically be said is that, by government omission, the poor rather than the rich were hurt. If this constitutes a basis for Treasury intervention so be it, but it is a dangerous precedent, to be contemplated only because the pensioners (unlike investors, say, in BCCI) had no choice where their money went. The best way forward is to proceed ad hoc for the government to initiate and contribute to a hardship fund to tide them over, until a longer term solution is available.

## ITALY STARTS TO CRACK

Not since the communist challenge of the mid-1970s has the Italian political system pulled down by so much at stake. Most Italians are heartily sick of the revolving door governments in Rome, whose only constant is corruption, patronage, intrigue, cronyism and a byzantine legislative procedure. For years the country tolerated its chaotic public sector as a national joke, while big business and family entrepreneurs got on with making the country rich.

Now the joke has worn thin. The recession has hit the north, and the government, burdened with a public debt larger than Italy's gross domestic product, has neither the strength to take unpopular economic decisions, nor the foresight to prepare Italy for the cold douche of the 1992 single market. The Christian Democrats, who have since the war formed Europe's last single-party government in coalition with a permutation of smaller parties, have used the threat of communism to justify their permanent hold on power. That has collapsed along with Italy's once formidable communist party. Voters are now likely to turn against the Christian Democrats, their fickle government allies and the Party of the Democratic Left, the enfeebled successor to the communists.

The parties exploiting this massive electoral discontent are mostly on the right. The MSI, the neo-fascists, are likely to increase their strength on April 5, appealing especially to those who resent the presence of around a million immigrants, many illegal, from the Maghreb and black Africa. They have a stylish candidate in Alessandra Mussolini, the grand-daughter of *Il Duce*, but little else, beyond the racist rhetoric now found on the right all over Europe.

More formidable is the challenge from the Lega Nord, the association of northern "leagues" which wants greater regional autonomy from Rome and which embodies the northern resentment of the south and of the huge sums of money poured into the

depressed region. The Lega's supporters say the efficient, Europe-oriented north is being pulled down by southern mafiosi, by taxes and inefficiency, by the failure of Rome to legislate a framework that would give scope to Italy's political and economic potential.

Their challenge is not simply that they promise a disciplined, efficient alternative in much the same way as Mussolini promised to make the trains run on time; it is that they are calling for far-reaching changes in the creaking constitution, including the abolition of the upper house in parliament and its replacement by three regional senates to represent the north, centre and south. Such changes would certainly shake up the sclerotic bureaucracy and could invigorate democracy throughout the country. The danger is that the league's appeal is entirely populist, based on bombastic rhetoric and simplistic solutions. The league denies that they are fascist, but they appeal to the same fears as fascism.

The challenge to Italy's body politic comes not just from fringe parties. It also comes from the Quirinale itself. President Cossiga, the volatile head of state, has tired of his figurehead role, and wants to stretch his constitutional authority to speed up reform. He believes that only a strengthened executive presidency will overcome party intrigues, and a referendum in the summer showed that most voters agree. But in championing reform he has run straight into the opposition of his former party ally Giulio Andreotti, the prime minister and master manipulator whose power is entirely based on his ability to broker deals.

Their present feud now looks quintessentially a product of Rome politics. Voters wanting to register a protest at all this now have a bewildering array of 26 parties from which to choose, and among them the Lega Nord may win only around 10 per cent. Sadly, the league is likely to be further fragmentation: hardly a basis for a stable reforming government which Italy so badly needs.

## HOLIDAY RELIEF

Travel can broaden the mind. It is certainly broadening the beams of aircraft and lengthening their hop. British Airways has announced that it is planning a three-deck, 600-seater aerial hotel, with exercise areas, self-service restaurants and business areas with flying faxes. In addition, two new long-haul airlines are being launched in this otherwise unpromising year for British aviation.

Nor are the economies of scale of this travel gigantism confined to the air. On March 29 Majesty of the Seas, the largest passenger ship in the world, will call at Southampton en route for her maiden Caribbean cruise. Nearly 200,000 Britons went on such far-flung cruises last year. It is a booming business: in spite of the recession and unemployment, the great British foreign holiday continues to grow. The one growth area in aviation today is in longhaul travel, to destinations such as Phuket in Thailand, the Maldives, and Orlando, the headquarters of Floridian Disneyland — places beyond the range and often beyond the ken of previous generations of foreign trippers.

More than half of the charter aircraft engaged in this traffic are not designed for such long journeys, and have to make an expensive and tourist-unfriendly stop to refuel. Hence the need for purpose-built aircraft. In the industry, the debate is mainly whether the proposed new longhaul mass-carriers of holidaymakers should be all one-class, or should have the extra perks of a first-class section to attract businessmen on expenses.

In the arithmetic that counts, there are only two classes of travel — first class; and the one for British tourists off on package holiday. The world of travel is improving if it is beginning to separate the two classes. What the tourists want is guaranteed sun to bask in, copious alcohol and gambling of a simple-minded sort, some sea to dip in, and one-upmanship snaps to flash around the office. With the possible exception of the drink, the businessman is looking for something more businesslike.

For modern tourists, the new longhaul airlines and cruises are meeting a market demand. For those who want that sort of thing, unlimited sun and fun should be available in the Sahara, the Indian Ocean, the Gambia and the littoral of Florida. It is a vast social improvement that many Western Europeans can now afford to go on their foreign holidays and fairly grand tours. And if these new forms of transport and packaging can give them what they want, which is what the market exists to do, it will spread the burden of tourism more thinly. The whole Mediterranean shore may yet be saved from suffocation by longhaul airlines and gigantic cruise liners.

Already, the British shift to overseas holidaying has made old British tourist resorts such as Blackpool, Torquay and Ayr quite tolerable once more. Territories like Corfu and the Costa Brava, which used to be individual and interesting, can at last have their millionstones of mass tourism removed, and find their individuality again.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

### Arts funding: separating 'nationals' from the regions

From Lord Armstrong of Ilminster

Sir, In the face of such an impressive and powerfully expressed demonstration of unity by all the surviving chairmen of the Arts Council (letter, February 26) in defence of the "arms-length principle", discretion might seem to be the better part of valour for the rest of us — even if there is the faintest murmur of "they would, wouldn't they?"

There is indeed much to be said for keeping as far out of politics as possible the business of taking decisions about the allocation of individual grants to publicly-funded bodies in the field of the performing arts. We do not apply the arm's-length principle to the national museums and galleries, and we are not on the whole much troubled with allegations of political interference in curatorial or museological policies; but the performing arts are arguably different. There is clearly greater scope for political interference in decisions about (for instance) what plays, or what sorts of plays, should or should not be put on in a subsidised theatre.

A politician who was tempted to engage in such a sort of direction or censorship would no doubt incur a great deal of vociferous criticism. Some politicians might not mind that too much; but one would think that a little reflection would convince most of them to prefer a system which removed from them both the temptation and the risk.

The Arts Council and the "arm's-length principle" serve that purpose; and the Arts Council has a role as an advocate for the performing arts as well as a distributor of public funds.

One reason why the arm's-length principle has come under such strain recently is the increasing pressure on the limited amount of public funds available for the performing arts. In such circumstances it is inevitable that the ultimate paymaster — the government — will concern itself with the detailed requirements and funding of at least the main national arts clients.

Those clients can be forgiven for thinking that there is not much real length in the arm between them and the government. A little more generosity in the funding of the Arts Council would take a good deal of the heat out of the argument about the length of the government's arm.

Another reason for the present difficulties is the change in the balance of the distribution of funding for the performing arts as between the "national" companies — the Royal National Theatre, the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Royal Opera House, the English National Opera, the London orchestras, and so on — and regional arts companies and activities.

I would not wish for a moment to deny the importance and value of the latter or to deprive the regions of the additional money they are receiving as a result of the Arts Council's decisions deliberately to increase the proportion of its funding that goes to them. But it is regrettable that the extra money for the regions has had to be to some extent at the expense of the nationals, since the maintenance of excellence at national — and international — level is as much a part of a healthy artistic climate in the country

as a whole as is a thriving network of artistic activity in the regions.

The decision as to how the arts' share of public expenditure is to be divided between the nationals and the regions is inevitably a political one, since even if it is taken outside government it has strong political implications.

This leads me to suggest that, while retaining the arm's-length principle for decisions on the distribution of slices — or crumbs — from the Arts Council's cake to individual clients, decisions not only as to the size of the cake but also as to its division between the nationals and the regions should be taken where political decisions are best taken: in government.

The government's grant to the Arts Council should be divided into two parts, or two separate grants, one for the nationals as a whole and the other for the regions as a whole; the Arts Council should be responsible for decisions on the allocation of funds to clients out of each of the two grants, but should have no power to transfer them between the two grants except with the agreement of the minister for the arts.

I believe that this would help to take some of the strain out of the present difficulties of applying the arm's-length principle to the public funding of the performing arts. But I do not wish to be misunderstood: it is no substitute for more money, both for the nationals and for the regions.

Yours faithfully,  
ARMSTRONG OF ILMINSTER,  
House of Lords,  
March 9.

### Editing on television

From Mr Paul Woolwich

Sir, The former Conservative minister, Christopher Chataway, was neither misled nor misrepresented by *This Week* during the making of our programme on political party funding (letter, March 7).

A month before the programme he was invited to be interviewed on the whole range of recommendations on electoral reform in the Hansard Society's report he chaired, including campaign donations.

During the course of research for *Who Pays the Piper?* we discovered the alleged undisclosed payments to the Conservative party by Folly Peck and decided to concentrate on secret donations as a result.

In fact, Mr Chataway was fully aware that we were addressing the subject. Not only was he told, but he was also prepared to comment on the £400,000 payments. In an untransmitted section of his interview he described the donations as "very disturbing" and added:

It seems that large amounts of money were given to a political party and not disclosed by the company as it should have been. So I think this is another very good argument for requiring the political parties actually to disclose where major contributions come from.

Viewers will have been in no doubt that the programme addressed secret donations and not "the argument that major parties ought not to take money from rich individuals" as Mr Chataway suggests.

It seems sad that Mr Chataway, a former TV journalist, now welcomes the demise of investigative programmes like *This Week*. It not only aired one of his and the Hansard Society's principal concerns but also exposed some uncomfortable truths.

Yours faithfully,  
PAUL WOOLWICH, Editor,  
*This Week*,  
Thames Television plc,  
306-316 Euston Road, NW1,  
March 9.

### Cyclists hit back

From Councillor Peter McGrath

Sir, To accuse many cyclists of "un-wholesome self-righteousness" (leading article, March 5) because they wear crash helmets and anti-pollution masks is unfair: they are a direct response to the dangerous, polluted conditions that urban cyclists are forced to ride in. As for our "games of chicken", these are survival tactics needed to deal with erratic or bad drivers.

When I narrowly avoid being crushed by a car ("sorry, mate, I didn't see you"), or arrive at work dizzy and sick through the exhaust fumes I have inhaled, I don't feel unwholesomely self-righteous, I feel mad.

Yours faithfully,  
PETER MCGRATH,  
76 Portman Road, Liverpool 15.

### Swinging movement

From Mr Charles J. M. Williams

Sir, Philip Howard reports ("Ging Gang Gooly rap", February 26) that the scouting movement has written a rap in order to appear more "trendy" and appeal to Britain's more mis-guided youth.

The whole point of songs within the scouting movement is to rouse a feeling of comradeship and to help give the boys the secure feeling of being a member of the team. A rap is never going to rouse such feelings. May I suggest a much more plausible medium — the rugby or football song/chant.

Every Saturday tens of thousands of people sing/chant/shout "songs" at their respective football or rugby football grounds, managing to unite an audience of tremendous variety (including racial variety). With a subtle change of lyrics — most scouts are under the age of 15 — they can be

### Fresh options for tomorrow's army

From Major-General J. M. Strawson

Sir, The House of Commons Defence Committee (report, March 7) has rightly confirmed what many others have often said: that HM government is profoundly mistaken in proposing to cut the army by so many armoured regiments and infantry battalions. But there is still time to put things right.

The difficulty lies, not in making a better plan, but in ministers' unwillingness to concede that they may be mistaken. Soon, however, we may expect, if not a new government, a new set of defence ministers. It will be for them to correct the present mistakes.

What they should do, within the existing limits of money and manpower, is to give orders that the army will contain at least four more infantry battalions and two more armoured (or armoured reconnaissance) regiments than at present planned. The number of men involved, say 3,000 or so, would be saved by radical changes in administrative corps and by de-specialisation.

These extra operational units would correct the proposed imbalance between combat and support arms; enable us to meet present commitments without overstretch; and provide a reserve for unexpected crises and for a proper relief programme of emergency tours.

If new ministers, aided by a new Chief of the General Staff, cannot see this and take the necessary action there are plenty of others who could

and would show them how to do it. At the very least HMG should demand, welcome and examine an alternative plan — based on strategic needs and changing political circumstances, while taking account of new tactics, weapons and deployment — for an army which will be able properly to carry out its tasks and which will appeal to the best of our young people.

Yours,  
JOHN STRAWSON,  
The Old Rectory, Boyton,  
Warrminster, Wiltshire,  
March 7.

From Lord Wedgwood

Sir, The long-awaited report by the Commons defence select committee has justifiably launched a stinging attack on the government about the size and shape of the infantry cuts proposed by the ministers at the MoD. It presents the government with a serious obligation to abandon Options for Change in favour of a full defence review.

I fear that unless this difficult but utterly necessary decision is taken, we shall be left with a defence policy that leaves us poorly insured and with our national security in serious jeopardy. If the Conservatives are credibly to consider themselves the party of strong defence, it is incumbent upon this government to bear up to this most serious of responsibilities.

Yours sincerely,  
WEDGWOOD,  
House of Lords,  
March 7.

### Twinning in cattle

From Mr M. P. Coffey

Sir, It is a shame that the ethics of embryo transfer in cows (letters, March 3) cannot be addressed by Alan Long as a separate function of dairying. The use of emotive expressions such as "called for burgers after three or four years of this exploitation" does little to contribute to the questions he purports to be addressing. The point is, a cow has a useful product once its life as a milk producer is over.

Embryo transfer in dairy cows is nothing new, but is used by very few dairy farmers (less than 2 per cent) for multiplying valuable stock. The

use of this technique to implant twins is new and, as yet, has not met with widespread approval.

However, the general public should be aware that animal welfare is the highest priority for those involved in embryo transfer. Why? Because the value of the animal, and the cost of the technique, dictate respect for the animal.

Yours faithfully,  
MICHAEL P. COFFEY  
(Research analyst),  
The Holstein Friesian Society of Great Britain and Ireland,  
Scotsbridge House, Scots Hill,  
Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire,  
March 4.

### Shelf-life of fish

From Mr Thoby Young

Sir, Frozen fish has been doing well in "blind" tastings recently (report, March 5) for one reason: it has improved in quality. The multiples should give up on their faintly absurd quest to extend the shelf-life of perishable fresh fish with high-tech novelties like gas-flushing.

Their valuable resources would be

better spent on improvement in distribution and handling of fresh fish. Enabling the public to make up their own minds about the relative merits of fresh and frozen can only be done when the fresh fish is as good as the frozen.

Yours etc.,  
THOBY YOUNG,  
The Fresh Fish Co.,  
100 Bayswater Road, W2,  
March 5.

chanted with as much vigour as those at Twickenham or White Hart Lane.

Yours faithfully,  
C. J. M. WILLIAMS,  
125 Hartley Road,  
Radford, Nottingham.

From Mr George Carter

Sir, Philip Howard is correct to sound a note of caution about the latest code-of-conduct which the Scout Association is seeking to lead its merry band. Fortunately, they are not the only scouting body in England and Wales.

Since 1972, when the Baden-Powell Scouts' Association was registered as a charity, more than 200 groups have been formed and the association has pursued an independent

policy aimed at retaining real scouting as B-P would recognise it, yet being in touch with the modern world.

Baden-Powell Wolf Cubs (for they retain that title) continue to "dub" and "dob" as enthusiastically as ever, and appear to enjoy the woods and wilderness rather more than did Mr Howard. Our Boy Scouts still wear traditional uniforms, including velvety hats which are useful for carrying water. Our senior scout troops, and even Rovers, still seek out the byways and backwoods, without need of new-fangled Venture units.

The Scout Association will labour in vain to eradicate the old image of Boy Scouts. It is alive and well within the Baden-Powell Scouts' Association.

Yours faithfully,  
GEORGE CARTER,  
53 Vale Street, Eningshall,  
Wolverhampton, West Midlands.

### A borderline case for Europe

From Mr P. J. Woodman

Sir, If we are attempting the difficult task of defining Europe (leading article, March 3), then we have to determine our contexts. The boundaries may be geographical or they may be political, but the two are not the same.

In geographical terms, Europe has indeed traditionally been seen as stretching from the Atlantic to the Urals, though what one does in the south-east is more open to debate: here Western geographers have usually considered the Caucasian watershed to be the boundary, whereas Russian geographers have favoured the Manych-Gudilo depression to the north and thereby placed the entire Caucasus region in Asia.

Your reference to Atatürk notwithstanding, we should note that Turks take great pride in claiming that their country geographically belongs to two continents: west of the Bosphorus is Europe while east of it is Asia.

Yet clearly, in political contexts, countries cannot be split in this way. The Bosphorus cannot divide Turkey politically; nor can the Urals so divide Russia. So if Russia, Ukraine and certain of their neighbours wish to belong within a political Europe, then so be it. Such decisions will not of themselves mean that geographical Europe is suddenly obliged to extend to Vladivostok.

After all, Italy and Greece did not physically remove themselves to the North Atlantic littoral when they became members of Nato.

Yours faithfully,  
P. J. WOODMAN  
(Secretary),  
Permanent Committee on Geographical Names for British Official Use,  
c/o The Royal Geographical Society,  
1 Kensington Gore, SW7,  
March 3.

### Delors attack

From Lord Bruce of Donington

Sir, There would seem to be legitimate fears, shared by all political parties in the UK, that the European Commission's proposals for a greatly increased EC budget to meet the financial implications of the Maastricht Treaty may result in Britain's net contribution to Community funds increasing from £2.8 billion to £3.8 billion. Estimates in this connection have already been submitted by HM government.

It is therefore astonishing that the reaction (report, March 3) of M. Delors, President of the Commission, to the presentation of HM government's views should be one of arrogant abuse.

Your report quotes him as saying that Mr Hurd's sums did not add up and the calculation could be done by any schoolchild coming out of primary school. "We could give it to English schoolchildren as an exercise". This makes it abundantly clear that he is an obstacle to any reasonable and meaningful discussion on this very important question.

The continued arrogation to himself, as a non-elected and well-paid international civil servant, of the unfettered right publicly to criticise individual ministers is surely by now a question of principle to be borne in mind when consideration is given to his reappointment.

Yours sincerely,  
DONALD BRUCE,  
House of Lords,  
March 3.

### Energy resources

From Mr Jeremy Hornsby

Sir, It is wrong to confine discussion about the run-down of the coal industry (letter, March 4) simply to coal as a fuel. I had the privilege of helping Lord Gormley with his autobiography, *Battered Cherub*, published in 1982, from which I quote:

When you make coke from coal, you get about 27 by-products, similar to those from oil-refining. The point about turning coal into oil is that you get these by-products from that process, too. So I forecast that, by the start of the next century... coal will be regarded as such a valuable commodity that people will look at it at the idea of doing anything so crude as to burn [coal] in power stations. In fact, you can get these by-products from natural gas as well. An industrial society... needs these by-products... for producing everything from dyes to plastics. There's a very good case for saying that it is a criminal waste to burn either coal, or natural gas, or oil.

Those who would run down the coal industry — please discuss.

Yours faithfully,  
JEREMY HORNSBY,  
55 de Beauvoir Road, N1.

Business letters, page 23

### Down on the farm

From Mr Anthony Lowe

Sir, I was surprised and delighted to discover (leading article, February 27, "Caring for farmland") that the government paper *Action for the Countryside* envisages "a programme to enhance the abundance and distribution of scarce and vulnerable species".

Little did I imagine, when I first started in farming, that one day I would be described in these terms.

I remain, Sir, your scarce and vulnerable servant,  
ANTHONY LOWE,  
Little Cullum Farm,  
Lower Halstow,  
Stingbourne, Kent,  
March 2.







OBITUARY

MENACHEM BEGIN

Menachem Begin, leader of the militant Zionist movement Irgun Zvai Leumi (1943-1948), founder of the Herut party, prime minister of Israel (1977-1983) and Nobel Peace Prize winner (1978), died in Jerusalem yesterday aged 78. He was born in Brest-Litovsk, Poland, on August 16, 1913.

From Soviet labour-camp inmate, militant Zionist — whose men blew up the King David Hotel in Jerusalem in July 1946 — to Nobel Peace Prize winner for the peace-treaty he signed between Israel and Egypt in 1979, Menachem Begin played a definitive role in the formative years of Jewish state and in the world events of his time. The massacre of 250 Arabs by his Irgun forces at the village of Deir Yassin in 1948 changed the demography of the newly partitioned Holy Land and the hanging by his men of two British sergeants was credited with doing more than anything else to break British determination to continue its role in Mandated Palestine. Later, he averted a civil war between rival Jewish forces by belatedly accepting the authority of Israel's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, after the Irgun arms ship, *Altalena*, was blown up by Israeli artillery off Tel Aviv (while he was aboard). He subsequently bowed

to an atmosphere of interwar Poland. He was educated first at a Mizrahi (religious Zionist) elementary school, later at a Polish government high school, and finally at Warsaw University where he took a degree in law, although he never practised it.

Throughout his life he was an Orthodox Jew in the religious sense. He insisted on kosher food and refused to write or to use wheeled transport on Saturdays, but did not attend synagogue every day, or even every Sabbath, and made no secret of the fact that he listened to the radio on the Sabbath.

At the age of 15 he joined Betar, the Zionist youth movement founded by the "Revisionist" leader, Vladimir Zeev Jabotinsky (1880-1940), who insisted on the necessity of a Jewish state embracing both banks of the Jordan and on force as the only credible means to achieve this end. Begin became his most passionate disciple and this led to his first clash with the British in 1937 when he was imprisoned for leading a demonstration against the British embassy in Warsaw to protest at British policy in Palestine. Two years later he was appointed by Jabotinsky as head of Polish Betar, the largest section of the world movement.

After Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia had divided Poland between them in 1939, Begin was arrested by the Russians and sentenced to eight years' correctional labour as "an element dangerous to society". However, after three months in a labour-camp in the far north of Russia — an experience he later described in the book *White Nights* — he was released



The national leader: prime minister of Israel, 1977-83

lashes with a heavy cane, a British major and three NCOs were captured and flogged; and on July 30, 1947 two British sergeants were formally hanged. The British put a £10,000 price on Begin's head, describing him as an "irresponsible fanatic thirsting for personal power," but were never able to capture him.

After the hanging of the British sergeants Begin turned his attention to the danger of Arab resistance to the creation of the Jewish state. His greatest "achievement" on this front was the massacre of Arab villagers at Deir Yassin, on the outskirts of Jerusalem, on April 9, 1948. Although he always denied that such a massacre had taken place (in spite of detailed eye-witness accounts, mostly from Jews) Begin did not scruple to claim the credit for its effect: the panic flight of most of the Arab population from what was to become Israeli territory.

On the proclamation of the state of Israel in May 1948 Begin emerged from the underground and signed an agreement with the provisional government, providing for the merger of the Irgun into the national army. However, Begin regarded this agreement as valid only within the existing boundaries of the state. He thus considered himself free to continue fighting independently "to put the nation in command of the whole country".

In June the *Altalena*, a former US tank transport, arrived off the Israeli coast with a cargo of arms for the Irgun, violating a UN-monitored truce between Israel and the Arabs. Ben-Gurion, as prime minister, took this as a direct challenge to the new state's authority. The ship, with Begin on board, was shelled by the Israeli army on June 22 in full view of Tel Aviv beach. Fourteen Irgun fighters, including Begin's boyhood friend Avraham Stavsky, had been killed and 69 wounded before the ship surrendered. Begin said later there had been only two occasions he had wept. On the night the state was proclaimed and the night the *Altalena* was fired upon by fellow Jews. Not surprisingly the incident left a legacy of irreconcilable bitterness between the two men, and so between the two main branches of Zionism — Labour and Revisionist.

Thereafter Begin was a politician. He quickly transformed the Irgun into a political party, the Herut (freedom) movement, and emerged as a formidable speaker both in parliament and at public meetings. Yet to begin with he spoke only for a small minority of Israelis — 11.5 per cent in the 1949 elections, falling to 6.6 per cent two years later. His party was to keep eight consecutive elections before coming to power in 1977.

In the early years his style was much more that of a mob orator than a responsible parliamentarian, and in 1952 he came close to the brink of insurrection in his violent denunciations of the government's decision to accept reparations from West Germany. In 1955 he fought the general election from an open-topped Cadillac with an escort of young leather-clad motorcycle outriders — an image which uncomfortably recalled the fascist movements of the 1930s. Ben-Gurion even went so far as to compare him with Hitler.

But as the 1950s and 1960s wore on, Begin began to acquire respectability. In 1965 his party formed Gahal, an electoral block with the Liberal Party, as a united opposition; and on the eve of the Six Day War in 1967 he joined the national unity government formed by Levi Eshkol, becoming deputy prime minister. After Eshkol's death he remained in office under Golda Meir, but resigned in August 1970 when Israel first formally accepted the principle of a negotiated peace involving withdrawal "from territories occupied in the 1967 conflict".

In the election held just after the Yom Kippur war, a broader right wing group, the Likud, still led by Begin, gained eight seats.

Golda Meir retired exhausted in the spring of 1974. In the three years that followed it became apparent that the Labour Party, after a quarter of a century in power, had lost both its grip and its sense of direction. Plagued by a succession of corruption scandals, it appeared to more and more Israelis, especially those of North African or Asian origin (by now roughly half the population), as the vehicle of a smug and patronising aristocracy, almost exclusively European and based on the kubbuzim and the nationalised industries. Begin, although European himself, never talked down to the "oriental" Jews and so came to be seen by many of them as a champion of the underdog against the self-serving governing clique. His intransigent nationalism also appealed to most of them.

In the elections of 1977, Yitzhak Rabin was forced to renounce the leadership of the Labour Party after the disclosure of financial irregularities involving his wife and the Likud campaign, ably organised by the former air force hero Ezer Weizmann, swept Begin to victory in spite of a recent heart attack.

Begin swiftly made it clear that he was determined to establish permanent Israeli control of "Judea and Samaria" (the West Bank of Jordan) by lifting restrictions on Jewish settlement there. His arrival in power effectively doomed President Carter's efforts to reconvene the Geneva peace conference of 1973, with a view to obtaining a peace involving a Palestinian "homeland" on the West Bank. In July 1977 in Washington Begin had the first of many clashes with Carter on the settlement issue, and refused to budge.

Yet Begin was aware of the need to keep the door open for peace, and to make a good impression on foreign leaders. For that reason he chose Moshe Dayan, the former war hero and Labour defence minister, as his foreign minister, and in deference to him refrained from outright annexation of the West Bank. And when President Sadat of Egypt, after sending a special envoy to sound out Dayan at a secret meeting in Morocco, astonished the world by announcing his willingness to come to Jerusalem, Begin knew how to respond. He promptly declared that the Egyptian president would be welcome, and clearly relished every minute of his role as host in what must have been the most intensively publicised state visit in world history.

His response to Sadat's gesture was, however, one of courtesy rather than warmth. He took a month to formulate his substantive counter-proposals, which he put to Sadat at a second meeting, at Jerusalem in Egypt, on Christmas Day 1977. Israel would withdraw from Sinai by stages, but the Jewish settlements in the Rafah salient would stay and would still be defended by the Israeli army. In the West Bank and Gaza the Arab population would have "administrative autonomy" but Israel would keep control of security and public order and Israeli citizens would retain the right to settle. Sadat on his side continued to insist on complete Israeli withdrawal from all the territory occupied in 1967, and self-determination for the Palestinians.

Begin had accepted President Carter's invitation to a summit conference with Sadat at Camp David in September 1977, but went there fully prepared to resist American pressure. He and the Egyptian leader never established an easy personal relationship and virtually all the negotiating at Camp David was done indirectly, through the Americans. It took Carter 12 days of patient, often extremely tense argument to get Begin to agree to put the withdrawal of Israeli settlements from Sinai to the Knesset, since it was clear that this was a *sine qua non* for peace with Egypt — though even then Begin was not prepared to recommend the withdrawal of settlements, in one of which he

had actually promised to make his home after retirement. Sadat on his side accepted the proposal for autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza, but only as a five-year transitional solution. This left the door theoretically open for ultimate Israeli withdrawal, but also enabled Begin to avoid waiving Israel's claim to sovereignty. The form of autonomy was to be negotiated between Israel, Egypt and Jordan, with possible Palestinian participation in the Egyptian and Jordanian delegations. (but Jordan had not been consulted about this, and in fact refused to take part). Carter believed that he had secured Begin's agreement to freeze Israeli settlement activity during the transitional period. It turned out, however, that Begin had only promised a moratorium of three months while the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty was being finalised.

Despite an atmosphere soured by this misunderstanding, the Camp David accords were widely hailed as a major breakthrough (or, among Arab nationalists, as a sell-out) and the following month Begin and Sadat were jointly awarded the Nobel peace prize. The haggling continued

gave the foreign ministry to Yitzhak Shamir, the former leader of the Stern Gang, an extremist off-shoot of the Irgun and by that time a hardline Herut member who had refused to support the Camp David accords. He kept the defence portfolio in his own hands. The "peace process" marked time and public attention was diverted to economic policy where things were not going well as Begin failed to back the finance minister, Yigal Hurvitz, against other members of the cabinet.

To many observers the prime minister appeared to be fading fast and heading for certain defeat in the 1981 general election. But the approach of another election campaign seemed to stimulate a new flow of adrenalin. In January 1980 Hurvitz resigned and was replaced by Yoram Aridor, whose extravagant reflationary policies brought real, if short-lived, benefits to many Israelis. Begin for his part rallied support with a furiously nationalist campaign in the course of which he publicly abused the leaders of France and West Germany, talked himself to the brink of war with Syria over the deployment of missiles in Lebanon's Bekaa valley, and sent Israeli bombers to destroy a nuclear reactor in Iraq.

The government was only just re-elected: in alliance with the religious parties, Likud had an overall majority of two. But it was enough. Ariel Sharon, who as agriculture minister had been the driving force of Jewish settlement in the occupied territories, now became defence minister and, with the chief of staff, General Rafael Eitan, began planning a new war in Lebanon aimed at demolishing the Palestine Liberation Organisation — the main focus of resistance in the occupied territories — and, they supposed, ensuring Israel's lasting strategic supremacy in the area by humiliating Syria and wresting Lebanon from her control.

Begin, it seems, was an enthusiastic supporter of this project. For him the struggle with Syria coincided with a struggle to regain his own health and vigour after a fall in November 1981 which broke his hip and condemned him to some months of pain and discomfort, using first a wheelchair and later a stick. As soon as he was out of hospital he surprised the world with a bill to annex the Golan Heights (Syrian territory occupied since 1967), which he rushed through the cabinet, three parliamentary readings and a committee stage in the course of a single

hundreds of Palestinian refugees — but he was always ready to defend their actions after the event.

Begin never expressed any public remorse for what had happened to non-Jewish civilians as a result of his actions and policies. "Goyim kill goyim and they blame the Jew" was his comment on the international outcry after the Sabra-Chatila massacre. Only under extreme pressure from the entire Israeli establishment did he consent to the appointment of a commission of inquiry into Israeli responsibility for the affair. When it reported the following February he took the minimum action required of him: he would not take the initiative in dismissing Sharon, but left the decision to the cabinet; and when Sharon very reluctantly agreed to relinquish the defence ministry, Begin allowed him to continue as minister without portfolio.

Yet during the summer of 1983 Begin's sank into a deep depression which eventually made it impossible for him to continue as prime minister. This was no doubt partly the result of his wife Aliza's death but above all because of the

● In his supporters' eyes he had proved a doughty fighter ●

lengthening list of Israeli casualties caused by the war in Lebanon, which his government had begun but seemed unable to finish.

Begin announced his intention to resign on August 28, a few weeks after his 70th birthday. He remained officially prime minister, though refusing to speak to anyone but close relatives and personal staff, until October 10 when Yitzhak Shamir finally took over. So deep was Begin's melancholia that it was not until December 10, after a skin complaint which had prevented him shaving responded to a new treatment, that he felt able to move out of his official residence.

It was a sad end to his premiership of the Jewish state. The qualities of leadership which had marked his command of the Irgun and, initially, his peace-settlement with Egypt, finally deserted him. He had inherited a relatively prosperous, optimistic country proud of the prowess of its defence forces. He left a nation uncertain and divided, with fewer friends and more enemies. The invasion of Lebanon had divided the country,



The peacemaker: with President Carter and President Sadat, 1979

throughout the first eight months of 1978, while the atmosphere was enervated in the spring by the invasion by Israel of southern Lebanon which Begin ordered after Palestinian terrorists hijacked a tour-bus on the coastal road between Tel Aviv and Haifa and massacred 32 civilians. The invasion did not succeed in its objective of destroying the PLO guerrilla forces: it simply drove them a few miles further away from the frontier. Under American pressure Israeli forces withdrew, handing over part of the territory seized to a UN buffer force and part to a Lebanese auxiliary militia.

The peace treaty between Egypt and Israel was signed, after much further haggling and a personal shuttle between Egypt and Israel by President Carter, in Washington on March 26, 1979. Begin faced some fierce opposition to it within his own party but his authority, combined with the support of a large majority in the country, was sufficient to force it through and to enable the final, most controversial phase of withdrawal from Sinai three years later.

The West Bank autonomy plan, by contrast, was left to wither on the vine, despite sporadic and desultory negotiations between Israel and Egypt in which neither Jordan nor any representative Palestinians were prepared to join. For this outcome Begin must take much of the responsibility since he insisted on defining autonomy as restrictively as possible, allowed Jewish settlement in the West Bank and Gaza to proceed, with government funds, at an accelerated pace; and made it clear that Israel had no intention of withdrawing at the end of the five-year period.

By mid-1980 Begin had lost both his foreign and his defence ministers — Dayan and Weizmann, the two most independent-minded members of the government and the most committed to the idea of broadening the peace by giving real autonomy to the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza. Begin

day. This provoked a serious but temporary crisis in Israeli-American relations.

It took Begin and Sharon some months to convince their colleagues that the moment had come for a full-scale invasion of Lebanon: on four occasions in the first five months of 1982 they were dissuaded by American pressure. On the last occasion, in May, the cabinet agreed that the next attack on Jews or Israelis anywhere in the world would be treated as a *cassus belli*. Accordingly when the Israeli ambassador in London was shot on June 3 (in fact by a Palestinian splinter group violently hostile to the PLO leadership), the Israeli

Israeli troops were stuck deep in hostile territory and some 60 Israelis were in jail for refusing to serve there. The economy was in disarray and the hopes engendered by the peace with Egypt had evaporated.

In his supporters' eyes Menachem Begin had proved a doughty fighter for his cause, helped re-insill Jewish pride, and won the support of the "oriental" Jews and others who felt excluded from the western-inclined society created by Ben-Gurion and his Labour successors. From an international perspective he had responded with some courage to Anwar Sadat's risky peace-initiative by inviting him to Jerusalem and grasping the nettle of relinquishing the Sinai and entering into an honorable peace with Egypt. In spite of his shortcomings he remained a towering cult figure held high in public esteem in Israel and continued to epitomise Jewish pride as well as stubbornness.

He always rejected the accusations that he had been a terrorist saying that the Irgun had not attacked civilians. Arab civilians however were undoubtedly among Irgun's victims as were non-military personnel, including Jews, the King David hotel.

For a year after his resignation Begin remained in almost total seclusion. Last year, in a full interview given to mark the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Irgun Zvai Leumi, he recalled with pride his decision to launch the Israeli air-raid against Iraq's nuclear reactor, which he said had been vindicated by the events in the Gulf. The hardest decision of his career, he said, had been to order the hanging of the British sergeants. "But after that cruel act there were no more hangings of Jews in the land of Israel."

Menachem Begin leaves a son, Binyamin, a Herut member of the Knesset and two daughters, Hadasa (named after his mother who was murdered by the Nazis) and Leah.



The soldier, 1942

to the democratic process; and after nearly 30 years running a tiny political grouping on the extreme right of the political spectrum won reward for his patience, gaining power in 1977 as prime minister. It was his unquestioned commitment to the widest perception of *Eretz Yisrael* (the land of Israel) that enabled Begin to carry all but the most uncompromising of his followers with him when in 1979 he relinquished Israel's vast tracts of conquered land in the Sinai and signed the Jewish state's first, and so far only, peace-treaty with a neighbouring country. But it was his lack of vision and weakening command that was primarily responsible for Israel's failure to develop and build upon that first peace. And then, in what proved to be the evening of his political career, he proved unable to restrain the adventurist policies of Ariel Sharon, his defence minister, and General Rafael Eitan, his chief of staff, in launching the full-scale invasion of Lebanon in 1982. This aggressive war led to the massacre by extremist Christians of hundreds of unarmed Palestinian refugees trapped in the camps at Sabra and Chatila; cost 650 Israeli lives and thousands of Lebanese ones; divided Israel and lost the Jewish state much of the international sympathy it had gained over the previous 30 years.

Menachem Begin, who lost his parents and a brother in the Nazi holocaust, was driven by twin forces: an unswerving determination never again to see Jews betrayed to slaughter and a cast iron belief in their destiny to reclaim all their ancient homeland. "The world does not pity the slaughtered," he said. "It only respects those who fight."

As unfailingly courteous in private as he could be vengeful in public, Begin was a slight, fastidious individual with angular features and poor eyesight. He was also a stickler for protocol and, in contrast to most of his casually dressed countrymen, was seldom seen unless smartly dressed in a dark suit and tie. He came to symbolise for much of the world the hard and uncompromising face of Zionism, determined to ensure the security of the Jewish state in its historic or biblical frontiers and seemingly indifferent to any suffering that this might cause to non-Jews.

Begin was always a controversial figure both at home and abroad. Yet he had the statesmanship to make the necessary concessions for the peace-treaty with Egypt and at the end of his career, in spite of the disarray in which he left the country, he was revered by many Israelis almost as a father figure. Even some of his opponents came to regard him as a restraining influence on the more violent nationalist elements in Israeli society, though many argued that those elements had received fatal encouragement from his policies and speeches. Menachem Wolfvitch Begin was the son of a convinced Zionist and grew up in the turbulent and often anti-semitic



The terrorist, 1948

Age: 34 years  
Height: 5'8" (175 cm)  
Build: Thin  
Complexion: Yellow  
Hair: Dark  
Eyes: Brown  
Nose: Long, hooked  
Mouth: Thin, straight

Arabs and 17 Jews. The intention had apparently been to humiliate the British rather than to cause so many casualties, but a telephone warning did not reach the British in time. The Jewish Agency, which through the Haganah command had tried to get the operation postponed, promptly denounced it and ended the united resistance, concentrating thereafter on diplomatic methods to hasten the end of British rule.

From then on the Revisionists fought a lone and increasingly vicious battle with the British, retaliating for the flogging and execution of their own members by responding in kind. After a British military court sentenced two 17-year-old Irgun members to 15 years imprisonment and 18

NOTICES

Legal Notices also appear on the Personal Page

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# THE TIMES BUSINESS

TUESDAY MARCH 10 1992

BUSINESS EDITOR JOHN BELL

19

## Committee recommends MMC referral

# MPs demand enquiry into generators

By SHEILA GUNN AND ROSS TIEMAN

NATIONAL Power and PowerGen, Britain's two biggest electricity generating companies, should be investigated by the Office of Fair Trading, the Commons energy select committee has concluded.

The call for an OFT investigation forms the centre-piece of a report into privatisation of the electricity industry that fiercely criticised the failure of the sale to produce competition. The committee also accused the government of putting Britain's coal industry at risk.

Although the committee stopped short of recommending a break-up of the two generating companies, which dominate the market, an OFT study might well conclude that was the best way to improve competition in power markets.

Professor Stephen Littlechild, the electricity regulator, who has the power to make a reference, said he would be "happy to work within" the committee's recommendation.

John Wakeham, the energy secretary, acknowledged that competition was imperfect and promised to look closely at the committee's 50 detailed recommendations.

He also indicated that the government may now be prepared to intervene to block further construction of gas-fired power stations. Construction of more than 7,000 megawatts of gas-fired capacity has already been contract-

ed, and as much again is believed to be planned. During evidence, the committee heard that the replacement of low-cost coal capacity with high-cost gas threatens to increase power prices and put tens of thousands of miners out of work.

Mr Wakeham said: "Those who are thinking about gas-fired project will need to consider carefully the evidence received by the select committee that the most efficient coal-fired stations can produce electricity at costs which are significantly lower than alternative fuels."

He said the government "may also need to consider if it should review the use of its powers under the Electricity Act to issue consent to power stations."

Such an intervention would be a remarkable shift in the policy of a government that has hitherto refused publicly to intervene to modify distortions caused by lack of competition in the power market.

The Tory-majority Commons energy committee also predicted a drastic and rapid contraction in Britain's coal industry unless the government took action.

The committee concluded that because of the failures in privatisation, caused mainly by the domination of two main generators, consumers were not enjoying the benefits of the sell-off.

Within the next three years, the director general of electricity supply should refer the two generators to the monop-

olies commission, it added, otherwise the failure to stimulate genuine competition in the industry could threaten long-term security of supply. In addition, the generators should be ordered to offer surplus sites for sale to reduce that risk.

The committee report concluded: "We see the potential for some benefits to consumers from electricity privatisation, but considerable further development and reform of the new electricity supply industry will be needed if those benefits are to be achieved."

"The evidence overwhelmingly confirms that the competitive market which was promised has not yet materialised. Fine-tuning will not be adequate: much more substantial changes are needed, especially in the generation sector and the operation of the pool."

The MPs also questioned the government's predictions about the future of the coal industry. Mr Wakeham had told them he would be alarmed if the forecast of only 10 to 15 pits in 1995 proved correct.

"We believe he should be alarmed now," the MPs said. "New evidence has made brutally apparent how drastically and rapidly Britain's coal industry will contract if present policies continue."

"The widely-leaked Rothschild report, prepared to assist the government in privatising the industry, postulated a situation in which only 12 or 14 pits would survive compared with the present 52."

The committee said that the threat to British Coal's market from gas-fired generators was now greater than from coal imports.

"If preserving a substantial indigenous coal industry of serving secure supplies at stable prices is regarded as an insurance policy, the premium required is a relatively small one."

"Moreover it is likely to be a declining one as British Coal continues to improve its productivity and lower its prices. We strongly believe that British Coal must be given a fair opportunity to compete in the generation market, for the benefit not only of those who work in the coal industry but also of electricity consumers," it added.

The MPs concluded that closures of deep mines were inevitable.

The report's recommendations include:

- Ordering existing generators to sell power stations scheduled for closure.
- Reduce the dominance of the two generators.
- Referral of the two generators to the MMC no later than 1995.
- Changes in the "pool", providing the stock market for supplies.
- Greater priority for the director general to protect consumers' interests.
- Monitoring the code of practice on disconnections.



Taste of success: Howard Phillips, chief executive of Perkins Food, savours a pre-tax profits rise of 34 per cent to £24.3 million for the year to end-December. Earnings per share rose 16 per cent to 11.9p. The final dividend is 2.6p, making 4.3p for the year, a rise of 13 per cent. *Tempus*, page 20

## Ports go to three buyout teams

By OUR INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

MALCOLM Rifkind, the transport secretary, yesterday approved management and employee buyouts of three of Britain's largest trust ports, Tilbury, Medway and Clyde. The sales are expected to raise a total of £60 million.

The simplicity of the privatisations contrasts with the furore that followed the £180 million sale of Tees & Hartlepool in January. There, a management and employee buyout was rejected, and so was the highest bidder, Maritime Transport Services (MTS).

Dissatisfaction with the Tees sale led MTS to withdraw from bidding for Medway, leaving the management and employee group, Medports Mebo, the only bidder. The price being paid is £29.7 million. Management and employees will own 51 per cent of the shares.

There were two bids for both Clyde and Tilbury, and in each case a management and employee group made the highest offer. Clyde will be sold for £26 million to Clydeport Holdings. Clydeport, which has reserved at least 60 per cent of shares for employees, outbid Regis & Regis, a local property developer.

Tilbury, the biggest trust port, will be sold to an employee group called International Transport for £32 million. Employees will own 50.1 per cent of the shares. International Transport outbid MTS.

The Ports Act 1991 laid down that half of the proceeds from the sale of Medway and Clyde would go to the Treasury; the rest would be returned to the bidders. At Tilbury, the proceeds will go to the Port of London Authority (PLA).

Only one more trust port is likely to be privatised this year. On Thursday, the Forth Port Authority will be floated on the London Stock Exchange.

Peter Vincent, Medway chief executive, said he was "relieved and delighted". Two years of hard work had gone into the sale, he added. Medway more than doubled pre-tax profit to £3.8 million for the year to March 31, 1991.

## Serious Fraud Office goes in at European Leisure

THE Serious Fraud Office has announced that it is investigating European Leisure, the owner of London's Hippodrome night club, after papers were passed over from the Department of Trade and Industry.

Investigators from the SFO telephoned Ian Rock, European's managing director, yesterday to tell him that they are examining the group's acquisition of Midsummer Leisure, a pubs and snooker club operator, in May 1990.

The SFO will be assisted by officers from Scotland Yard's fraud squad. The investigation was sparked off when the DTI handed the SFO a file on European, which is believed to include secret tape recordings about the acquisition of Midsummer.

The investigation is a further blow for European, which is struggling for survival under a £72.5 million debt mountain. Last week, it warned that it must cancel the dividend on its preference shares this year due to the insistence of its banks.

European is estimated by analysts to have lost £3 million in 1991 because of heavy interest charges. The shares were pushed down 1p to 5p.

European battled to acquire Midsummer throughout the spring of 1990. The takeover, originally worth £89 million was announced in April and was agreed by Mid-

summer's board. But Midsummer withdrew its support a week later after European's share price plunged sharply from 80.5p to 64p. European won control in mid-May.

At the time European was headed by Michael Ward, a former corporate financier from SG Warburg. He left the group in July last year after the fall in share price and criticism from major shareholders.

Mr Rock, a former director of Midsummer, said yesterday that he did not know anything about any wrongdoing in the company. "This is an inconvenient interruption. My job is to restore the company to prosperity and I feel I am making progress," he said.

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## Nuclear Electric 'drove up prices'

By OUR INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

NUCLEAR Electric, the state-owned atomic power group, may have forced up electricity prices artificially throughout England and Wales.

Professor Stephen Littlechild, the electricity industry regulator, said. He has begun monitoring dealings by Nuclear Electric after it sold less than half the power it was offering at auction because the reserve price was too high. "There is a distinct possibility that the restriction in output did have the effect of driving up prices," he said.

He is to hold talks with Nuclear Electric about changing the way it sells contracts, for differences, financial instruments used by bulk power buyers to protect themselves from fluctuations in the pool, or spot market.

Professor Littlechild's concern is an acute embarrassment to Nuclear Electric, and reflects badly upon its owner, the energy department. John Wakeham, the energy secretary, recently met industrialists concerned at steep rises in bulk power prices. Nuclear Electric has announced the immediate "freezing" of its spring power auction, which

had already begun. "This will give breathing space to the company and its customers to reflect on their position," a statement said.

The company also called for the regulator to allow it to sell power direct to customers under simple contracts, a freedom enjoyed by its rivals.

The concerns about the effects of Nuclear Electric's behaviour come only months after an enquiry by the Office of Electricity Regulation found that PowerGen had distorted pool prices by its bidding behaviour. It will increase the firepower of critics who say the structure of the power industry sell-off has proved uncompetitive.

Professor Littlechild is poised to change Nuclear Electric's operating licence to make its operations more open to competitors and force it publish information about plant availability.

More than 15,000 people complained about their electricity company last year and disputed bills were the biggest cause of complaint. The number of disconnections fell by a third to 47,913.

## New MTM warning shakes market

By MARTIN BARROW

MTM, the specialist chemicals company, stunned the stock market yesterday by issuing its second profits warning in just over a week. The company's shares, which traded at more than 280p late last month, plunged from 189p to 82p just minutes after Richard Lines, the chairman, gave warnings that trading profits for 1991 would be significantly below expectations.

The shares partly recovered to close at 119p, but analysts were left angered and confused.

"Confidence in the company has been shot to pieces," said one analyst. "There is no basis left on which to value the company."

Yesterday's slump wiped another £62.2 million off MTM's market capitalisation. The share price collapse is

an embarrassment for Mr Lines who last September cashed in 1.2 million shares at 247p, raising £3 million. In May 1990 he sold 712,000 shares at about 223p and five months later the share price fell to 140p following a rights issue.

Robert Fleming and MTM met Stock Exchange officials late last week to consider the possible suspension of MTM's shares ahead of yesterday's announcement to avert an unruly market.

However, the exchange ruled that insufficient grounds existed for a suspension.

Mr Lines' statement on trading appeared to contradict answers given to analysts at a meeting in London on March 2.

The company and its advisers, Robert Fleming, convened analysts to explain proposed changes to MTM's accounting policies, to be implemented at the request of



Lines: contradiction

Binder Hamlyn, the auditors. The chairman, who was accompanied to the meeting by Tom Baxter, MTM's finance director, said that although the new policies would result in lower profits at the pre-tax level the trading performance showed "a sound,

profitable business growth in challenging economic circumstances."

Publication of results for 1991 was put back to March 31 and to underpin City confidence the company forecast a final dividend of 3.73p a share, making 5.6p for the year, up from 5.1p in 1990.

The pledge served to limit the initial fall in the share price to 60p at 226p, although selling continued throughout the week.

Charles Lambert, a chemicals analyst at Smith New Court, said: "There was a categorical response by the chairman and his finance director to questions about trading."

Analysts were told that the accounting problems, which related to the capitalisation of some product and process costs, amounted to growing pains and had no impact on trading or future prospects.

### TODAY IN BUSINESS

#### ACCIDENT



Robert Maxwell went overboard at a fortuitous time in the electoral cycle. Pension regulation is largely an accident of history, a Commons adviser writes. *Page 23*

#### SLOWING

BBA Group, the automotive, aviation and industrial components firm, suffered a 34 per cent profits fall last year. *Tempus*, page 20

#### WATER POWER



Ian Byatt, director general of the office of water services, is to have his powers over utility financing reinforced. *Page 21*

#### POTHOLES

Transport Development Group, the road distribution company, is making provisions of £18.6 million. *Tempus*, page 20

#### PLEA



NatWest wants the inquiry into Blue Arrow reopened after allegations concerning Tom Frost, its chief executive. *Page 21*

#### US dollar

1.732 (+0.0077)

#### German mark

2.8674 (-0.0026)

#### Exchange index

90.0 (+0.1)

#### Bank of England official

close (4pm)

#### FT 30 share

1984.4 (+15.8)

#### FT-SE 100

2550.7 (+17.6)

#### New York Dow Jones

3219.59 (-2.01)

#### Tokyo Nikkei Avge

20797.68 (-195.31)

#### INTEREST RATES

London: Bank Base: 10 1/4%

3-month interbank 10 1/4% to 10 1/2%

3-month interbank 10 1/4% to 10 1/2%

US: Prime Rate 8 1/4%

Federal Funds 4%

3-month Treasury Bills 4.02-4.01%

30-year bonds 100 to 100 1/4%

#### CURRENCIES

London: New York:

£: \$1.7219

£: DM1.8661

£: Sfr12.5983

£: FF16.7285

£: Yen227.28

£: Index: 90.0

ECU: £1.71213

ECU: £1.40308

London: New York:

AM: \$348.00 pm: \$348.80

close: \$348.70-349.20 (2312.50-2313.00)

New York:

Comex: \$349.25-349.75

#### NORTH SEA OIL

Brent (Mar) ... \$17.40 bid (\$17.35)

#### RETAIL PRICES

RPI: 135.6 January (1987=100)

\* Denotes midday trading price



**BY MARTIN BARROW**

Huntleigh Technology has acquired an 80 per cent interest in the distributor of its healthcare products in Australia, Huntleigh Healthcare, formerly known as Sequencer. Huntleigh Technology will pay £2.000 over the next three years to pay for the acquisition.

**Sweet and sour:** John Thornton, chairman, reported earnings sharply down

**BY MARTIN BARROW**

Keith Bradshaw, chairman, said that growth of between 1,200 and 1,400 beds a year was sustainable with-

"The demographic argument shows that we have a serious social problem and Labour acknowledges the role the private sector must play," he said.

**BY JONATHAN PRYNN**

Baltic generated £55 million of cash last year, bringing big reductions in gearing and bank debt and an increase in net assets from £67 million to £70 million.

The market is already looking to 1993 for any meaningful improvement in profits and the rating reflects this expectation. The shares traded at 132p yesterday, nearly 18 times expected earnings of 7.4p. On a 1993

The odd takeover such as yesterday's £6 million acquisition of pie-maker Rowleys will still happen, but Howard Phillips, Perkins' chief executive, says the group has reached critical mass and 1992 will be a year of organic growth. Analysts expect it so be in double figures.

In 1991 pre-tax profits grew by 34 per cent to £24.3

group's business with Holland accounting for 72 per cent. Dependence on the Dutch market should decline to 56 per cent next year with the UK making up 25 per cent.

In the current year the group is expected to make £30.5 million, according to David Atkinson at County Nat West. This puts the shares, up 2p at 149p, on

Britain should drive profits up to £42 million in the current year, increasing earnings to around 19p a share. The p/e of 13.6 implies a premium of around 13 per cent to the market, which is probably fair.

## BUSINESS ROUNDUP

**HENDERSON** Administration is to pay £1 million for a 25 per cent stake in Sabre, a futures fund management business, and has an option to acquire a further 26 per cent. Sabre, founded by Henderson, has funds of almost \$100 million under management and specialises in currency, financial and commodity futures. Since its launch ten years ago, it has become one of the largest companies of its type in Europe and also acts for many American clients. Henderson says managed futures are attracting institutional interest in America and Japan.

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# BSkyB achieves operating profit ahead of forecasts

By MELINDA WITTSTOCK, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH Sky Broadcasting, which has cost its shareholders more than £1.5 billion to set up, yesterday revealed that it had achieved a small operating profit almost a year ahead of its original forecasts.

But the six-channel satellite broadcaster is still burdened with £1.28 billion of debt owing to its shareholders. Weekly interest bills on this total £2.8 million, which is being rolled over.

BSkyB is this month making weekly operating profits of £100,000, compared with weekly losses of £10 million in November 1990, when Sky Television merged with British Satellite Broadcasting after a bitterly fought and

expensive battle to entice the public to buy their rival services.

Sam Chisholm, the chief executive, and Frank Barlow, chairman of BSkyB and managing director of Pearson, refused to forecast when the station would become truly profitable by making more profit than it pays out in interest. Neither would they predict when BSkyB will have paid back its shareholders in full.

James Capel, however, has forecast that BSkyB will be repaying debt to its basic shareholders — News International, which owns The Times, Granada Group, Pearson and Channel 4 —

until the year 2000. Smith New Court, meanwhile, has forecast an operating profit of £49 million next year.

The debt is owed directly to News International, which controls 50 per cent, or to the banks of the original BSkyB shareholders, who guaranteed loans at the time of the merger.

Yesterday's figures, all on a weekly basis, show that overhead costs have been slashed from £6.5 million to £1.8 million. Staff has shrunk from more than 4,500 to just under 1,000. Programming costs were also cut drastically from £5.1 million to £2.9 million each week.

Richard Brooke, the director of treasury and planning, said new ten-year deals signed with all seven major Hollywood studios would be saving BSkyB \$100 million a year within five years. He said deals meant that all the top 50 UK box office hits in 1991 would premiere on The Movie Channel and Sky Movies.

Meanwhile, BSkyB is bringing in £3.8 million a week in subscription revenue plus another £1 million in advertising. Tony Vickers, group sales and marketing director, pointed to Saatchi & Saatchi figures that predict satellite will have 30 per cent of the British television advertising market by 2002, against ITV's 55 per cent. He said all the UK's major advertisers — Unilever, Procter & Gamble and Halifax — were now advertising on Sky, which is undercutting ITV by 20 per cent on rates.

BSkyB now reaches 2.9 million British homes, with 78,000 satellite dishes sold in February. Another 26,000 dishes were sold in the last week of February because of the popularity of the World Cup cricket.

Gary Davey, the deputy chief executive, said BSkyB now reaches 13 per cent of all British television homes, or 17 per cent of the population. The six channels also reach 21 per cent of 16-34 year olds, and 23 per cent of 4-15 year olds.

He also revealed Broadcasting Audience Research Board (BARB) ratings figures, which show that BSkyB gets 31.7 per cent of the viewing in homes with dishes or cable, compared with ITV and Channel 4's combined share of 32.6 per cent and the BBC's share of only 27.3 per cent. Mr Davey said: "The next two years of instability for both ITV and the BBC represents an enormous opportunity for Sky."



Sitting pretty: Martin Jourdan, chairman, is confident house market prospects are starting to improve

## Cornwell Parker rise hints at recovery

By PHILIP PANGALOS

FURNITURE will top consumers' shopping lists once they have recovered the urge to buy, according to Martin Jourdan, chairman of Cornwell Parker, the Parker Knoll furniture and fabrics group. He said the company was already starting to see signs that the housing market is beginning to improve.

Interim profits rose 3.7 per cent in the six months to end January, thanks partly to the elimination of borrowings and lower interest payments. Pre-tax profits rose to £3.7 million in the six months to end January, against £3.59 million last time.

Turnover, which was affected by disposals and a decline in certain sales, slipped to £44.1 million — down from £46.1 million.

Mr Jourdan said: "There appear to be signs that the housing market is beginning to improve and that consumer expenditure is poised to grow again. There is certainly evidence to show that there is latent demand for furniture."

"If the outcome of the general election leads to a strengthening of confidence, we have the ability to turn any increase in demand into a further improvement in profit."

The interim at Cornwell Parker is lifted to 1.7p from 1.6p on earnings of 5.9p a share against 6.3p.

## Decline in consumer credit suggests lack of confidence

By COLIN NARBROUGH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

OFFICIAL figures showed a further fall in consumer credit in January, underlining that the personal sector, unsure about its economic prospects, still prefers to reduce debt rather than borrow more while real interest rates remain high.

The eve-of-Budget data, which cover credit advanced to consumers by finance houses, building societies and on bank credit cards, put new credit at a seasonally adjusted £3.9 billion in January, down from £4.07 billion in December. The amount of credit outstanding fell £62 million, the sixth consecutive monthly decline.

The continued lack of consumer confidence in the run-up to the election is a disappointment to the government, which has lately sought to emphasise that the foundations for renewed confidence and economic recovery are in place.

Ian Harnett, chief economist at Strauss Turnbull, said the figures indicated that the "feel-good factor is not really heading in the right direction for a government going into an election". Given the continued political and economic uncertainty, he expected the economy to bump along the bottom for some time.

Neil MacKinnon, chief economist at Yanaichi International, saw a risk that any Budget giveaways might not be converted into higher con-

sumer spending. Instead, consumers might use the extra funds to repay debt or build up savings. However, Chris Dillow, economist at Nomura Research, argues that the figures had become less important as a guide to consumer confidence and spending. He believes those in work have no need to borrow and are using cash instead of credit for consumer purchases.

A revival in consumer confidence is seen as crucial to any substantial economic recovery. But the high level of borrowing in the consumer boom years of the late Eighties has left a large debt overhang, likely to inhibit a rebound. In the three months to January, the amount consumers owed under credit agreements was reduced by £290 million compared with £290 million in the previous three months. New credit in the same periods was £11.72 billion and £11.78 billion respectively.

Infotek, Britain's largest independent credit information organisation, has, meanwhile, detected signs of recovery in demand for consumer credit in the retail sector, which rose an annual 9.7 per cent in January after similar growth in November and December. The increases were flattered by credit demand being virtually absent in the winter of 1990-1 when the Gulf conflict deepened recessionary gloom. Other sectors, such as home and car loans, continue to show falls from a year ago in January.

Brian Bailey, Infotek chairman, said the retail sector had shown the most encouraging indications of improving consumer confidence, although the extension of the traditional New Year sales period may have contributed to the growth in demand.

He said further confirmation from the February data would be needed to make a more confident prediction.

## Ofwat to receive extended powers

By GRAHAM SEARJEANT, FINANCIAL EDITOR

IAN Byatt, director general of water services, is to be given statutory powers to back his recent moves to ensure that water companies separate non-utility businesses and finance them without any call on their main water and sewage functions. The companies will also be banned from subsidising their diversifications from their utility business.

Amendments to the Competition and Service (Utilities) bill, now being considered by the House of Lords, would oblige companies to keep separate accounts for non-regulated business and to trade at arms length with their utility business. Mr Byatt has already made changes to water companies' licences to put these measures into effect but has little specific power to enforce separation short of revoking a licence.

Despite the imminent election, it is still possible that the bill, which has all-party backing, will become law rather than falling automatically when parliament is dissolved. □ New nationwide figures released by Ofwat show that the average household water bill for 1992-3 will rise 8.5 per cent to £81, and the average sewerage bill by 9.2 per cent to £88 in England and Wales after nearly all suppliers waived some of their permitted rise for the year. The 3 per cent of households with meters will pay 21 per cent more on average at £205 for water and sewerage combined. For unmetered supplies, Portsmouth Water has the lowest average water bill at £58 and Thames the lowest sewerage bill at £69. The highest average bills are £146 for water, in the territory of the French-controlled South East Water, and £135 for sewerage in the area of South West Water, which has just had its price limits raised.

## Investment arm steadies Barings

By OUR BANKING CORRESPONDENT

BARINGS, the City's oldest merchant bank, held its pre-tax profits steady at £42.5 million last year, due to a record year in its investment management business.

The bank managed to avoid any bad debts for the second year in a row on its £1 billion loan book — in obvious contrast to the High Street clearing banks — due to careful control of credit quality.

The asset management division's funds rose by a quarter to £17.8 billion as it continued to benefit from its specialisation in emerging markets.

During the year the group raised \$152 million for Puma and Chrysler, two new funds for Latin American and international emerging markets. Barings' treasury business also saw new peaks as it profited from the successive falls in interest rates.

The contributions from these operations compensated for a setback in profits at Barings Securities which suffered from the fall in activity on the Japanese stock market. The Securities arm has now diversified into Asia and Latin America, and has opened offices in Mexico City and Buenos Aires.

Profits also fell in the corporate finance business from the record level in 1990 as Barings lost its top position in the mergers and acquisitions advisers table.

The results did not include any contribution from Dillon Read, the American investment bank in which Barings took a 40 per cent stake in November.

Peter Baring, chairman, said he hoped the two banks would develop new subsidiaries of business together.

All ordinary shares in Barings are owned by the charitable Baring Foundation, which earned an unchanged £3 million dividend in addition to a donation of £2.55 million.

## Sales cut clothing retailers' margins

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH

JANUARY sales might have been good news for shoppers but they were a mixed blessing for clothing retailers, according to a new report on pricing by Verdict, the market research group.

On average, clothing retailers sacrificed a fifth of their gross margins in an effort to tempt customers through their doors during the sales. Verdict reports, however, that the sales boost was not enough to prevent a profit shortfall for some retailers. "It is clear that the strategy of sacrificing margins for sales is not working," the report says.

On average, womenswear retailers offered discounts of 31 per cent of the original prices on 30 per cent of the items in their ranges. Menswear retailers offered discounts averaging 29 per cent on 34 per cent of lines.

In volume terms, womenswear is likely to show a modest uplift over the same period last year. Menswear, on the other hand, is expected to be down a couple of percentage points.

Richards, the womenswear multiple that is part of Storehouse, was the chain which marked its prices down the most during the sales. Around 45 per cent of its lines were marked down by an average of 34 per cent. Evans, the Burton chain selling large sizes, marked down around 37 per cent of its lines by almost 40 per cent.

Verdict reports that Burton Group needs a substantial increase in market share to offset the price cuts at its various chains, which include Dorothy Perkins, Debenhams, Principles and Top Shop.

Among groups which Verdict believes managed their sales well are Littlewoods, Next and River Island. The impact of their sales on their margins was below the market average in each case.

Next, in particular, experienced a margin impact of only 4 per cent, compared with the average of 10 per cent. Gross margins before discounting are on average 50 per cent.

## Cut in ECGD premium rates

A review of the Export Credits Guarantee Department's premium rates has produced substantial cuts on project business to certain markets, Tim Sainsbury, the trade minister said.

Premiums for some countries will go up, but reductions of between 20 to 40 per cent will apply for growing markets such as Hungary, Malaysia, Thailand, Mexico and Oman from April 6.

## Ransomes forced to raise borrowing

By JONATHAN PRYNN



Payout passed: Bob Dodsworth, of Ransomes

RANSOMES, the lawnmower maker has fallen into losses, axed its dividend and been forced to ask shareholders for an increase in borrowing powers.

Operating profits fell from £17.9 million to £6.1 million as a result of recession and last year's dry summer, which restricted grass growth. After interest charges and £1.5 million of exceptional redundancy costs, the loss before tax for the year to end-December was £4.5 million, against a £9.1 million profit the year before.

The company, which passed its interim payout, said it would not be "prudent" to pay a final dividend now but dividends would be a priority "once recovery occurs". Ransomes, led by Bob Dodsworth, has not yet decided whether to pay a convertible

preference share dividend due in April. Debt stood at £69.9 million (£64.4 million).

Since the year-end debt has increased in line with the seasonal pattern to more than £80 million. The group's £132 million banking facilities have been renewed until the end of November.

A combination of trading losses, a drop in value of the property portfolio and successive goodwill write-offs has resulted in Ransomes breaching the limit on borrowing specified in the articles of association of twice shareholders' funds. The company has convened an extraordinary meeting to request an increase in borrowing powers by including the value of written-off goodwill in the net assets value for the purpose of calculating the gearing ratio.

## NatWest wants enquiry reopened

By NEIL BENNETT, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

NATIONAL Westminster has urged the trade and industry department to reopen its enquiry into the Blue Arrow affair in an effort to silence suggestions that it withheld evidence from the inspectors.

Recent newspaper reports, based on the transcripts of the Blue Arrow trial, have suggested NatWest deliberately failed to give the DTI investigation access to relevant documents that had been annotated and corrected by Tom Frost, the chief executive.

Lord Alexander of Weedon, the bank's chairman, has written to Peter Lilley, the trade secretary, urging him to reopen the enquiry because he says the allegations are "damaging the reputation of NatWest and Mr Frost". "It also puts in doubt the authority and standing of the DTI inspectors' report on the Blue Arrow affair," he adds.

NatWest said the allegations were wholly untrue, and that this has been

confirmed by Wilde Sage, the firm of solicitors that acted for the bank throughout the investigation.

"The DTI's Blue Arrow report, published in July 1989, revealed how County NatWest, NatWest's investment banking subsidiary, had concealed a 9.8 per cent stake in Blue Arrow, the employment agency, after a rights issue in September 1987 by placing half of it with its marketing-taking subsidiary.

The report was deeply critical of NatWest and County NatWest and led to the resignation of three of the bank's directors and the early retirement of Lord Boardman, Lord Alexander's predecessor.

Lord Alexander's letter admitted this was an unusual request, but said the bank found it difficult to refute the allegations in public due to the appeals pending from the four bankers convicted in the Blue Arrow trial, and the possibility of a second trial.

"We are advised that the doctrine of contempt of court makes it inadvisable

for us to argue the facts publicly in full," he said. He went on to say that an article in The Economist had been published without giving Mr Frost any attempt to deny the allegations. "We believe the request we are making accords with basic fairness. It is important that allegations of this kind ought not to simply lie on the table." Lord Alexander asked Mr Lilley for a prompt response about the enquiry and promised the bank would co-operate fully to ensure it could report rapidly on these issues.

Mr Frost said: "Similar suggestions to these were put to me during the Blue Arrow trial. I utterly rejected those suggestions then and I do so again now."

This is the first time that NatWest has taken the initiative in the long-running Blue Arrow affair, and shows it is impatient to bury the subject. Lord Alexander's letter highlights the way the bank has strengthened its compliance controls and procedures since the affair.

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## Sparks fly over nuclear power

Stephen Littlechild, the increasingly bristly and frustrated electricity regulator, having become fed up with PowerGen and National Power, has turned his ire on Nuclear Electric, the third big generating group. There is something faintly bizarre about suggesting that the state-owned company, which can only turn a profit thanks to a fossil fuel levy that raises the general price of electricity, is somehow sabotaging the competitive private market through its commercial policy by keeping contract prices up artificially.

Unlike the other big generators, Nuclear Electric can sell as much as it can produce through the pool, not least because its marginal cost, in contrast to total costs, are the lowest available and are suitable for base load. Not surprisingly, Nuclear Electric has no desire to retire old plant, since its output will be taken one way or another. Its simple aim is to increase output. Even the oldest Magnox stations will be kept going as long as safety regulators allow, since this spreads sunk costs and puts off the potentially heavy costs of decommissioning. Concentration of effort has produced better results from several advanced gas-cooled reactors that have never neared planned capacity, helping to raise Nuclear Electric's share of the market from about 17 to nearer 20 per cent. Sizewell B is to come.

Yet the big users have become furious at Nuclear Electric's auctions of longer term contracts, raising the asking price too high. A second series of auctions started at the end of February was supposed to redress this by using a reducing reserve price to ensure that all offered contracts were taken. This looked promising but after much confusion, users rate the result a shambles, claiming the quoted prices are too high compared with the pool. Professor Littlechild evidently agrees, having concentrated his criticism on Nuclear Electric when presenting his annual report yesterday. One reason for the confusion may be that the pool price, which has been recovering smartly from last year's uneconomic levels, has suddenly relapsed under the weight of criticism.

If all the existing big generators can be accused individually of rigging the market and the new competitors think prices are still too low, the observer must surely conclude that the pool, and particularly the relationship between contracts and the pool, is basically at fault.

## State aid for R&D

Whichever party forms the government on April 10, its new supremos at Treasury and Trade would do well to consider the burning issue raised by Rolls-Royce at the weekend of selective state aid for research and development. Compared with their EC counterparts, British firms do less well in the matter of research and development funding, especially indirect funding.

This has given rise in Rolls's case to the bizarre circumstance whereby a company starved by Britain of launch aid and other assistance found a splendid market at Airbus Industrie, a company devised to build a substantial world market for European aerospace companies on the basis of government support. Airbus has thrived mightily to the extent that it now challenges American supremacy in civil aircraft manufacture and has made life difficult for the smaller of the two American giants, McDonnell Douglas. The latest in a string of incursions into the American market was a \$600 million sale to Delta of Airbus A310-300s, an order for which Boeing had high hopes. Without Airbus, Europe would eventually be sidelined in many leading edge technologies.

In the wake of the Maxwell pension fund scandal, there is growing pressure for legal reform, Sean Hand reports

The failure of the current system of pensions regulation to prevent Robert Maxwell from stealing vast sums of money from the numerous pension funds of which he was a trustee, occurred at a fortuitous time in the electoral cycle. The current system of pension regulation in the United Kingdom is largely an historical accident. Successive Conservative and Labour governments have found the long-term nature of questions relating to pension provision too unpalatable to confront. Ours is a society that is interested in solutions rather than problems. Given that policy has developed on such a basis, it would be surprising if the law did not reflect similar principles.

The influence of Christianity on English law is nowhere more evident than in the law of trusts. These laws provide the framework for employer-sponsored pension schemes in Britain, as well as in America, Canada and Australia. At its root, trust law gave legal expression to notions of conscientious behaviour judged before the Chancellor's court. Almost all the medieval Chancellors were ecclesiastics. The principle was secularised during the 16th century. The "conscience" became the Conscience of the Queen, and the Chancellor was designated the Keeper of the Queen's Conscience. The expectation that the law should punish unconscionable behaviour is still close to the hearts of the British people, and rightly so.

The concept of conscience was primarily responsible for the development of the role of the fiduciary. This concept is central to much of English trust and company law and the regulation of our financial markets. The two most notable fiduciary office holders are company directors and trustees. The meaning of fiduciary in English law is, however, vague and widely misunderstood.

Members of the public and politicians have expressed dismay at the failure of the regulatory authorities and the professional advisers concerned with the Maxwell pension funds, to intervene. There is clearly a significant difference between the view that those advising pension funds have of their role, and the view that the public and the politicians have. Some of the interpretations that are put on the word fiduciary in the context of not only occupational pension schemes, but also in the context of corporate governance in general, could fairly be summed up in the words of Lord Atkin, quoted from *Alice Through The Looking Glass*: "I know of only one authority which might justify the suggested method of construction. When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean, neither more nor less."



Time for change: Robert Maxwell's use of pension funds has prompted calls for new rules

more nor less. "The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean different things." "The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master — that's all." (*Liversidge v. Anderson* [1941] 3 All E.R. 338 at 361).

Pension provision, whether through the state scheme or through personal or occupational schemes, is about the transfer of wealth between age groups or generations. The historical reduction of old-age poverty is one of the great successes of the modern welfare system.

Pensioners are not a legal or actuarial term of art, they are a diverse body of people representing a rapidly growing social category. The diversity of this body of people is frequently overlooked in actuarial analyses of dependency ratios, i.e. the proportion of pensioners to earners. Economic experts predict that the cost of pension provision in the next century will be an issue giving rise to profound social, economic and moral questions.

Professor Paul Johnson, in *Work-ers versus Pensioners*, said: "The rapid ageing of the populations of all industrial countries over the next forty years, will be an economic transformation of vast magnitude, greater than the Seventies' oil price shock or the Eighties' recession."

It is essential to the continuing solvency of the state scheme and the economic foundation for any sense of moral responsibility to the preven-

tion of poverty in old age, that government can off-load some of this cost to private pension provision. This is partly achieved in the UK through the process of contracting-out of Serps and partly through the favourable tax treatment accorded to Revenue-approved pension schemes. The total cost of the relief given to such schemes in 1991-2 was £91 billion. The maintenance of good relations between government and the pensions industry, and with financial markets in general, is, therefore, crucial.

Pension funds constitute profitable business for investment managers and custodians. They are also one of the biggest investors in quoted shares on the Stock Exchange. The market value of pension funds' shares has risen more than eight-fold in the years 1979-89. By 1990, pension funds held 31.4 per cent of all quoted securities. Beneficial ownership of those pension fund assets is generally vested in the members of occupational pension schemes. There is no current legal requirement, nor is any proposed in Taurus, that documentary or other evidence of title, reflect that fact or even that they are pension fund assets. (The Unofficial Securities Regulations 1992, reg. 67).

The relationship between Whitehall and the pensions industry (and the financial markets in general) is

central to improving regulation. This theme permeates the report of the Bank of England's legal risk review committee (*Reducing Uncertainty — The Way Forward*).

The process of legal reform in this country is cumbersome. The understanding, involvement and support of the government is essential. If the English system of law is to continue to retain the respect of the people and the international business community, it is essential it is regarded as stable, fair and predictable. It must also protect the consumer. There are some who appear slow to recognise that the consumer in the area of pensions provision is the scheme member. Since 1980, at least four government-appointed committees have concluded that the trust law basis for occupational pension provision is inadequate to protect the consumers' interests.

Even in those cases where aggrieved beneficiaries are able to fund an action, they would be wise to recall the words of Justice M.R. one of the greatest equity judges of the 19th century, when he said: "This court is not, as I have often said, a 'Court of Conscience', but a Court of Law."

Those involved with the operation of pension schemes, especially trustees, should be able to operate their schemes without constant recourse to lawyers and accountants. Where advice is needed, lawyers should be able to give it with reasonable certainty. Because of the in-built conflict of interest in the present system

and the vagueness of many trust law concepts, it is often impossible to advise with sufficient certainty.

The law should not attempt to deal with every contingency in advance. Many in the pensions industry and financial community find difficulty coping with the volume of regulations issued by regulatory bodies. The trust law-based system, by its very nature, is developed principally by High Court litigation, the cost of which is frequently met out of pension fund assets.

Where access to justice is unequal, then fundamental questions about the rule of law may be raised. The social security committee has recommended that the newly elected government should establish a review body to consider the formulation of new pensions legislation. This body should take evidence in open forum so that, in the words of the committee, it "... would be a welcome break in the post-war approach, where some powerful lobbyists have been given access in the pre-legislative stages of a Bill which has been denied to others with equal or greater interest."

In the final analysis, responsibility for ensuring that financial regulation operates within an appropriate legal framework rests with government. Yet much of the legislation in this area, particularly that relating to pensions, is not sufficiently attractive to be allocated parliamentary time, hence the huge body of subordinate legislation in pensions law. The legislators (never mind lay trustees) have difficulty understanding the complexities of the subject. The extent and manner of consultation is, therefore, crucial.

The implementation rate of select committee and Royal Commission reports is not high. It was noted in the law commission's 1990 annual report that "... for the second parliamentary session running, the government's legislative programme includes no Bills implementing law commission reports."

In the light of this, the social security committee is to be complimented on its recommendation that if an incoming government fails to establish an appropriate independent review body, then another select committee should take on that task and draft a pensions Bill itself. Given adequate resources, this could prove to be a new and constructive role for select committees, ensuring, so far as the social security committee is concerned, a return of conscience to the law (assuming that appropriate legislation was passed).

The immediate question, however, for the 19 million members of occupational pension schemes in this country, and for those whose savings rely on financial market regulations, and for any incoming prime minister, is who will be the Keeper of the Queen's Conscience after the general election.

The author is head of the pensions unit at Cameron, Markby, Hewitt, and a special adviser to the Commons social security committee.

Leading article, page 15

## THE TIMES CITY DIARY

### Nasdaq on the lookout

GLOBAL custody, which, to the layman, means the computerisation of settlement systems, and represents a rare profit centre for banks, will be taking on a higher profile within Chase Manhattan. Isobel Carter has been recruited as head of strategic marketing for Chase, with responsibility for Europe, the Middle East and Africa. To accept the post, Carter — who previously marketed settlements for the London Stock Exchange — has resigned as marketing director of Nasdaq International, the European office of the North American securities exchange, the third biggest exchange in the world after New York and Tokyo. Her Nasdaq boss, Lynton Jones, is managing director, is looking for a replacement. "We will probably advertise, but it will be a difficult slot to fill," he says. "We are looking for someone with marketing experience, languages, because we cover the whole of Europe, and knowledge of ADR business." For the right candidate, he promises an exciting career. Through its London office, Nasdaq already operates a trading facility, in the European time zone, for all Nasdaq stocks. "We have more ADR's than the New York Stock Exchange," says Jones. "At the moment the facility, Nasdaq International Trading Services, is not used very much but we are lobbying the SEC for permission to expand into NYSE stocks. Then it could become very interesting indeed." He hopes that approval will be granted within six to eight weeks.

### BT JOB CENTRE



A READER tells us of yet another appropriate name. The Metropolitan Police 6 Area (West) Traffic Unit at Alperston, Middlessex, is headed by a Mr Carman.

### Sir Denys who?

THE 11,000 employees based at several ICI plants on Teesside had the shock of their lives last week when a story about the group's financial state appeared in a local newspaper. The fall in profits mentioned in the article in the *Darlington & Stockton Times* was, however, the least of their concerns. For the article referred to ICI's chairman as Sir Denys Hanson.

### Heaven or hell

THE single European market is rapidly becoming reality, but those age-old national prejudices refuse to disappear. Peter van Cuylenburg, a group director of Mercury Communications, recently suggested that "for most people the idea of a European heaven would be British police, French food, an Italian lover, German engineer-

ing and Swiss organisation". But this, he said, had its flip side. "Hell would be British food, French engineering, Italian organisation, German police and a Swiss lover."

### Property marker

A SIGN, perhaps, that the property market is reaching the bottom. Alan Goldberg and Jonathan Gold, who founded Gable House Properties in 1976 to take advantage of opportunities arising from the 1974 property crash, have done the same thing again. Gable House, where shareholders saw their investments increase fourfold in three years, was floated on the USM in 1983, capitalised at £2.5 million, graduated to a full listing a year later and was then bought by Ladbrooke for £22 million in 1986. Goldberg and Gold's five-year service contracts with Ladbrooke have now come to an end and the duo hope that history is about to repeat itself. They have formed First London Investment with the express intention of capitalising on the present property market collapse. They think the market will continue to decline for the next 12 to 18 months but claim this will give them a solid base for profits in the future — a policy expected to pay dividends from 1994 onwards. "Our objective is to purchase mainly let property be it commercial, retail, industrial or residential, with our initial activities being mainly in the UK," says Goldberg. "Later on, we do not rule out expanding into Europe."

CAROL LEONARD

### Abbey penalises 'normal' people

From Mr G.D. Clarke

Sir, My wife and I recently transferred the balances in our Abbey National accounts to new accounts because of different interest rates. The work could not be done on the spot, which meant we had to make separate visits later on to put our signatures in the new books.

This required proof of identity and I proffered my National Identity Card. I was told they were not allowed to accept ID cards, despite my pointing out that if they were good enough for Churchill they were certainly good enough for Abbey National. I was asked for a driving licence, passport or credit cards; we do not run a car, have not been abroad for 28

years and pay everything by cheque.

The impasse was solved by accepting the signatures in the previous passbooks which, as they had been sent back by post, were hardly more reliable as proof of identity.

With the recent announcement that because of fraud, birth certificates are no longer accepted either, those of us with normal life-styles are being increasingly penalised. It is high time that banks and building societies recognised this fact and did something about it.

Yours faithfully,  
G.D. CLARKE,  
31 Crumfield Lane,  
Walton on Thames,  
Surrey.

### Owners must act

From Mr Donald Butcher

Sir, Noel Falconer described in detail (*Business News*, March 2) the hurdles which the aspiring independent director has to jump if he wishes to land in the boardroom and provide the "bark and the bite" which you suggest is needed.

Many assume that independent directors will, in some unspecified way, bring about better corporate governance. So far, there's not much evidence to support this view. I believe better corporate governance will come from more vigorous barking and biting by shareholders — they are, after all, the owners. We should change the rules, especially the voting rules, to nudge progress that way. A significant shift in the balance of power towards the owners and away from the managers is plainly what an overwhelming majority is demanding — Sir Owen Green is the only important figure

who has publicly argued the contrary. We could begin by having meaningful — as opposed to sham — voting procedures at AGMs by all those shareholders who do attend — no proxies.

I attended 14 AGMs in 1991. Most were ineffective. Many were appalling. To observe some of our "captains of industry" trying to make a respectable presentation is certainly instructive — albeit sometimes embarrassing.

To allow such a potentially valuable forum as an AGM to become often worthless and a total waste of time for both directors and shareholders is an insult to all who take the trouble to attend — especially private shareholders, who do so at their own expense. Where will the impetus for change come from? There is, I suppose, nothing to stop shareholders trying to get their act together.

Yours faithfully,  
DONALD B. BUTCHER,  
12 Burch Heath Road,  
Epsom, Surrey.

### Mr Speaker, I shall begin with a review of the

On Tuesday afternoon Norman Lamont delivers his pre-election

economic situation and prospects. I shall then deal

budget speech. Find out what it means for interest rates, exchange

with monetary policy and the public finances.

rates, the economy, your business and you. As the Chancellor rises

Finally, I will present my tax proposals. I have

to his feet call up Reuters Pages **RBSA-B**, and watch The Royal Bank

sought to address a number of the concerns

of Scotland's Treasury and Capital Markets team provide instant

put to me and to carry forward tax reform

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initiated by my predecessors. The measures I have

Knowledge, experience, expertise. It's all yours at the touch of a

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the Royal Bank's Treasury Economist, Marian Bell - Reading

**Marian Bell on Reuters RBSA-B - Reading**

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THE TIMES TUESDAY MARCH 10 1992

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مكتبة النور

TUESDAY MARCH 10 1992

### Portfolio PLATINUM

From your Portfolio Platinum card check your share price movements on this page only. Add them up to give you your total and check this against the daily dividend figure. If it matches you have won outright or a share of the daily prize money. Your win, follow the claim procedure on the back of your card. Always have your card available when claiming. Game rules appear on the back of your card.

No	Company	Group	Share or Bond
1	Graydon	Property	
2	Schroder	Banking	
3	Shell	Oil & Gas	
4	Diema Corp	Drugs	
5	Br Aerospace	Motor/Air	
6	Cornwall Text	Textiles	
7	Reckitt Colm	Industrial	
8	Austrind	Industrial	
9	Transport Dev	Transport	
10	Sax & New	Breweries	
11	Inchcape	Industrial	
12	Ascent Br Port	Transport	
13	BOC	Industrial	
14	Logica	Electrical	
15	Storehouse	Drugs	
16	Marley	Building	
17	Chapman	Food	
18	Good Will A	Drugs	
19	Norwich	Drugs	
20	Hagg Robinson	Drugs	
21	Salverson Q	Food	
22	NFC	Transport	
23	Boiler	Food	
24	Fairview Ind	Oil & Gas	
25	Taylor Woodrow	Building	
26	Ellis & Eversard	Chemicals	
27	Bepak	Industrial	
28	Simon Eng	Industrial	
29	Harriman Coll	Industrial	
30	Severn Traw	Water	
31	Dunhill	Drugs	
32	EMAP	Newspaper	
33	Seabury	Building	
34	Hampden Hm	Drugs	
35	App Holo	Food	
36	Boat	Industrial	
37	Radlux	Industrial	
38	Anglian Water	Water	
39	Claxo	Industrial	
40	Alp Wiggins	Paper	
41	Bruton	Property	
42	Amec	Building	
43	Saver	Industrial	
44	Eurocamp	Leisure	

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Please take into account any minus signs

Weekly Dividend

Please make a note of your daily share for the weekly dividend of £2,000 in Saturday's newspaper.

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	WEEKLY

There were no valid claims for the Portfolio Platinum prize yesterday. The £2,000 will be added to today's competition.

Please take into account any minus signs

Weekly Dividend						
Please make a note of your daily totals for the weekly dividend of \$8,000 in Saturday's newspaper.						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	Weekly Total

There were no valid claims for the Portfolio Platinum prize yesterday. The £2,000 will be added to today's competition.

1991/92	Price																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																					
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# Wilderness that has burst into bloom

Life is being breathed back into Teesside, as leisure facilities and hi-tech businesses replace the old industrial eyesores. Peter Davenport reports

With a General Election in the air, party strategists are busy planning their sound bites and photo opportunities, those carefully choreographed occasions when politicians seek to present themselves in their best, vote-winning style. Such image-making can have lasting impact.

Five years ago Mrs Thatcher's brief stroll across wasteland in Teesside earned the headline a "Walk in the wilderness" as she launched her government's urban regeneration strategy amidst some of the worst industrial dereliction and blighted land in the country. The television and newspaper cameras captured a moment that summed up a wider problem.

Should the present, or future, prime minister choose to follow in Mrs Thatcher's footsteps, it would be to highlight a different message, not of despair but of hope and achievement. Today a different panorama is rising from a landscape was once dominated by the superstructures of heavy industry.

Steel and chemicals remain important, with millions of pounds of new investment. But now there are modern office blocks, bustling retail parks, waterside houses, enhanced leisure facilities and, unlikely as it may once have seemed, the imminent creation of a world-class nature reserve stretching across 2,500 acres of woods and wetlands.

The catalyst of change was the Teesside Development Corporation, created in 1987. But it was not the only hand on the tiller of regeneration. Industry, commerce and the region's local authorities have all played their part in creating a new image — one that has succeeded in attracting inward investment even during a depressed economic climate.

The lifespan of the corporation has now been extended to 1997 and its initial boundaries, covering some 19 square miles of some of the most industrially and social-

ly depressed land in the country, could be expanded.

By then, says Duncan Hall, the chief executive, the corporation will have injected £300 million of public money into its programme and generated at least £2 billion of private sector investment.

Since the day he was appointed to the job, a local boy returning to his home town, Mr Hall has refused to use grants and subsidies to lure new companies and instead adopted a high-profile policy of raising the investment value of the area by pioneering ambitious schemes, attracting major developments and persuading industry to move into Teesside for strictly commercial reasons.

There have been disappointments along the way and criticism from sceptics of the whole concept of urban development programmes, which they see as elitist and artificial. But Mr Hall is convinced that the impressive achievements to date offer Teesside the opportunity of a more stable and prosperous future.

"By the end of this decade the people of Teesside will be able to live, work and play in an environment which simply would not have been possible five years ago. When we started, a surfeit of large plans were issued over many years as to what the future aspirations of the area were. They had not been met, so the community had the right to be cynical about what we said we were going to do. In the end they had to see things happening and that is now before their eyes. Wherever you look now there are new developments coming through the ground."

The largest is taking place on 250 acres of former wasteland in a loop of the River Tees, Teesdale, three times as big as the Canary Wharf development in London Docklands, is a £600 million investment with high-quality office accommodation attracting rents four times higher than five years ago, a range of private and



Duncan Hall heads the Teesside Development Corporation

social housing and leisure facilities where 1,000 people will be living and working by October. It was the site of Mrs Thatcher's well-recorded walk.

It is also the location for the new Joint University College on Teesside, a venture between Durham University and Teesside Polytechnic. The first 240 students will enrol in October. It is an important milestone for the area, previously the largest industrial conurbation in the country without its own university.

This unique venture complements the move by the Polytechnic to take advantage of new government legislation and become the University of Teesside.

Another development is designed to give the Tees Offshore Base an important role in future sub-sea technology. Already more than 1,000 people work from the base, effectively replacing those lost when the last shipyard on the

river closed down in the mid 1980s. Now a £50 million joint venture has been announced between Northern Ocean Services, part of Cable and Wireless, and the Wellstream Corporation of America to put the base among the top providers of services to the international subsea gas and oil industry.

The development that attracted most criticism was the decision to build a £165 million marina at Harlepool on the north-east coast, yet it has proved so popular that the 80 berths originally planned have multiplied and will eventually total 750.

A major disappointment was the decision last year by the Ministry of Defence not to transfer its quality assurance division, and 1,500 jobs, to the Preston Farm location. Private sector firms have been attracted in its place and up to 1,600 new jobs are expected to be created.

Reflecting on the achievements of the past five years, Mr Hall said:

New look: Jim Potter, the manager of the Tees Offshore Base

"I have a quiet pleasure in the amount of progress being made. We can create a quality of development and environment at values and rents which had never been perceived of in this area. That is probably the major achievement because it offers a superb springboard for the future."

"We don't say the job is done but you need the added value in terms of development to build and to see further growth coming from new investments. We have also brought a range of opportunities

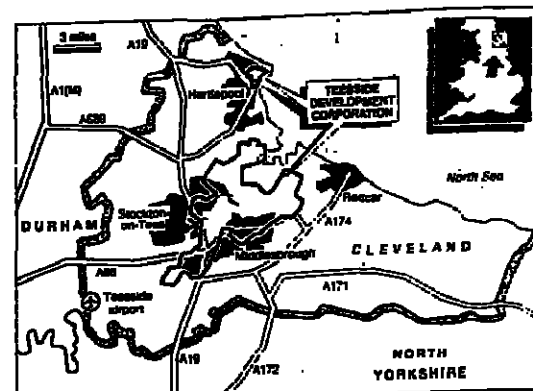
for the people here to live, play and work that had not previously been thought possible in this area."

Unemployment, though halved since its peak of 23 per cent, is still much higher than the national average. However, the local economy is now much more robust and diverse, less dependent on a handful of big industries than it was traditionally.

Mr Hall believes that the experiences of Teesside hold lessons for urban regeneration programmes elsewhere. "The lesson is that you

can't do it by coercion. It has to be done by co-operation. I still believe in a property- and market-led approach to development although it has to have related infrastructure to satisfy that demand."

"But in the end the corporation has not had to resort to the very extensive powers it has and in certain cases we erred on the side of the local authorities rather than implement development through more coercive methods. That basis of co-operation has been the key."



## SEA CHANGE

### Oil on troubled waters

JIM POTTER, the manager of the Tees Offshore Base, surveys the transformation of the old Smith's Dock Shipyard into an advanced technology centre to service the North Sea oil and gas industry, writes Rodney Hobson.

The yard closed in 1986 and was bought a year later by the Tees and Harlepool Port Authority. In the past 12 months, roads, water and high voltage electricity supplies have been completed at the 120-acre site, which has more than a mile of waterfront. Unsound buildings were demolished, others refurbished. A new administrative centre will open next month and its 5,000 sq ft of office space has all been let.

## A BRAND NEW UNIVERSITY COLLEGE IS MAKING EVERYONE GREEN.

Brand new Honours Degree courses in Environmental Management and Environmental Technology. Plus European Studies and Human Sciences. And a specially designed energy-saving College building on the Teesside Development Corporation's superb Teesdale site in Stockton-on-Tees. It all adds up to a package which is green in more ways than one.

Our new Joint University College on Teesside is a remarkable three way partnership. Teesside Polytechnic, Durham University and the Teesside Development Corporation have come together to create the first of a new generation of Higher Education Institutions. We have pooled the distinctive strengths of the University and the Polytechnic. And created an

exciting, innovative and participative approach which is committed to solving the new problems facing Higher Education today. Generous investment by the Teesside Development Corporation has provided our new College, purpose built to create a comfortable and welcoming environment for students, staff and visitors.

And of course, the Joint University College on Teesside is also committed to continuing its unique partnership approach by working closely with business, industry and other organisations. We will be opening our doors October 1992 so contact Professor Bob Parfitt on (0642) 342016 now for more information.



**THE JOINT UNIVERSITY COLLEGE ON TEESSIDE — EDUCATION MAKING A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE**

Joint University College on Teesside, University Boulevard, Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland TS17 6BH.





Ronald Faux reports on the 'supershed' built on an old racecourse, a new concept for Britain

# Farewell the high street?

On the 200 acres where Stockton racecourse once stood, there is now an £80 million shopping and leisure development that introduces the American concept of "shed" retailing to Britain. The term does not do justice, however, to the spread of smartly designed stores set around three sides of an oblong of tarmac with space for 2,000 cars.

The complex is designed to enable the shopper to drive to a large store containing a vast selection of goods. The stores are indeed well-appointed sheds, with large back doors opening to a service road. David Gummery, the chairman of Man's World, a menswear retailer, was an early arrival in Teesside Park. "The road network near by makes this the right place to be," he says. "We are very pleased with the quality and variety of the retailers who have come here."

About 15 of the 26 units are already occupied, he says, and the rest have been allocated. Retailers are starting to feel more optimistic. Store units of between 7,000 sq ft and 20,000 sq ft mean more space for a wider variety of goods, and the economies of scale mean lower prices for customers. Man's World claims to be the biggest store of its kind in the North-East, offering reductions of up to 20 per cent on most high-street prices. Space at £8 a

sq ft contrasts sharply with the £120 a sq ft that some Zone A high-street retailers have to pay.

Plenty of high-street names have moved to Teesside Park but some local entrepreneurs have taken equally appointed "sheds", which they can fit out as they choose. British Gas, for example, has built a full-sized house in its store as an unusual exhibition piece.

Traders believe that after initial concern the high-street traders have accepted the new giant on their doorstep. One trader said: "They were afraid at first but there is still room for the small independent retailer and what Teesside Park has done is generate a lot of new business, particularly among men who dislike going into town with their wives to shop. Here they can jump out of the car, get what they want quickly and jump back in."

As the growing number of stores opening in the park leads to greater choice, and people discover the free parking and easy access to the trunk roads, and with a 250,000 sq ft leisure complex opening near the new shopping area, the high-street traders could find their fears of competition reviving. The attractions of a ten-screen multiplex cinema, a 40-lane bowling alley, bars, restaurants and a night club may prove irresistible to customers who once shopped in the high street.



Good buys from the shed: shoppers at the Stockton centre load up in the large car park

# River flows to a cleaner future

Teessiders have been apt to turn their backs on the River Tees. For generations, it has not been a river they could admire nor one into which they would willingly jump on a hot day.

The shipbuilders, steel makers, chemists and engineers who established themselves on each bank found the tidal reaches a useful drain, Ronald Faux writes. After a century of heavy industry pouring gallons of pollution into the stream, as well as sewage discharges from a large conurbation, the river that crawled sluggishly through Middlesbrough became ugly on the eye and hard on the nose.

All that is soon to change, and a transformation which must seem to Teessiders almost as remarkable as the purging of Jordan's waters is about to happen.

The catalyst for transformation is a £40 million barrage, due for completion in 1994, across the river at Blue House Point, between Stockton and Middlesbrough. It will hold the Tees upstream at high-tide level, presenting a 23km head of navigable waterway for recreation.

At present, this stretch drains with the outgoing tide to reveal a trough of stagnant mudbanks and industrial debris.

The scheme will put a garland of fresh water around the Teesside development as new cleansing plants treat discharges that have been dumped into the

From stinking mud banks to salmon spawning ground, the Tees is about to lose its unlovely image

river. Eventually this will produce water fit to bathe in and a stretch that the developers claim will be unique in a British urban area. The downstream stretch of the Tees would still have heavy industrial usage but, with the help of EC legislation and National Rivers Authority surveillance, even the estuary will be improved.

Unlike a number of other estuarine barrage schemes, the Tees Barrage and Crossing Act, 1990, went through Parliament with little con-

signed to allow as much water to flow downstream as ever did.

However, sea water will no longer be able to flow upstream and when the tide goes out, the Tees upstream will be contained behind the barrage gates. Running above the barrage will be a road bridge, crossing the Tees.

The barrage gates are designed to contend with the once-a-century flood and to become neutral in flood conditions. The designers have raised riverside areas prone to flooding by about six feet to account for the possible effects of global warming.

The barrage will have a 90m span between the banks. There will be a lock navigation system on the

# Success in full swing

Mrs Thatcher would be impressed with a derelict area now transformed

In September 1987, for the start of the government's campaign to improve the inner cities, Margaret Thatcher took her daunting "walk in the wilderness" across a desolate stretch of Teesside. The then prime minister could hardly have chosen a more challenging starting point: 250 acres of contaminated earth bordered by the River Tees, which had become a tidal sewer.

Since then, the Teesside Development Corporation has moved in the diggers, engineers and architects to make a remarkable transformation. The new face of Teesside is emerging in Teessdale, a £500 million development of brick and stone, with residential zones overlooking canals and a business park, and office projects already providing employment. Mrs Thatcher's assertion five years ago that where initiative, talent and ability are joined together, money will follow has been proved.

Much remains to be done, but the extent of the steel and stone that has sprung up from where the Head Wrightson engineering company once stood makes clear the commitment to the scheme. Groundwork has been the hardest part. A million tons of earth and concrete had to be cleared, almost 2,000 yds of metal sheeting driven in to secure the banks of the Tees and more than 16 miles of roads and services provided to link Teessdale with the motorway and trunk road system.

About £60 million was ploughed into the core infrastructure, priming the pump as the new developments started. The first developers on the scene were Murray BS with a £10 million office construction at Dunedin House, which has become the flagship of Teessdale. Murray's neighbouring "Boulevard" office development is designed for smaller companies. Falconbridge offers more high-specification offices on a business development overlooking the Tees.

Residential schemes are undertaken by Wimpey Homes and Bradford and Northern Housing Association, and sheltered accommo-



At the point of many returns: moorings are in high demand among yachtsmen on the regenerated waterfront

# A safe berth is no joke

The success of Hartlepool marina has silenced the scoffs of its critics

SOMETIME in mid-August, ideally beneath blue skies and a warm sun, the old town of Hartlepool on the northeast coast will witness an event that until just a few years ago would have been undreamt of. A flotilla of more than 30 sleek yachts will breach the breakwater, and prepare to dock at the end of a string 330-mile trip from Lerwick, the third and penultimate leg of the Round Britain Yacht Race.

This year's event, which starts from Cowes on August 8, at the end of Cowes Week, and is organised by the Royal Yacht Squadron, is being sponsored by the newly created marina at Hartlepool, a £165 million venture that was greeted by disbelief when it was first unveiled.

The arrival of the Round Britain racers will be the ultimate riposte to those who doubted that the ambitious marina project would ever get off the drawing-board, let alone be so far advanced.

Hartlepool docks were built in the 1840s to serve the thriving export trade in coal from the mines of County Durham. The town has a long maritime tradition, and

was once one of the world's leading shipbuilding centres, but the last of its famous yards closed in 1962.

In more recent years, the lingering skills of its craftsmen have been turned to ship restoration rather than building, and the testimony to their abilities is on show in HMS Warrior, now a popular tourist attraction at Portsmouth, and HMS Trincom-

ale, the world's second oldest warship, built in 1817, and which will be a permanent feature of the maritime centre at the marina.

The decision to create the marina was intended as a symbol of Hartlepool's determination to shake off its old, care-worn image, and establish a new reputation. In spring 1989, the Teesside Development Corporation



**BRIAN BOYLE**, aged 37, a senior officer with Teesside Development Corporation, was killed in a road accident on Sunday, March 1.

Mr Boyle, a skilled and highly experienced civil engineer, was on secondment as operations manager to the corporation from the Glasgow-based firm of engineering consultants, Crouch Hogg Waterman.

He was highly respected for his achievements in civil engineering and had played an important part in the success of the corporation.

was allocated £51 million, one of the largest single grants ever given to an urban regeneration project, to begin work on the marina.

Initially, about 80 berths were intended, but huge demand has meant that the number has had to be doubled on three occasions, and there will eventually be 750.

Hartlepool intends to provide a full range of services and facilities for yachtsmen as good as, if not better, than any found around the coast of Britain.

The marina opened in April last year, and the joke among local sailors now is that should you take your craft to sea, you will find your berth already re-let by the time you nose back into harbour, so great is the demand.

The marina is at the centre of a larger, more ambitious scheme called "A Marina and Much More", covering about 200 acres and a mile of waterfront around the South Docks. It includes waterfront housing, specialist shops, a hotel, restaurant, bars and a business park.

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**Sir Denys Henderson**  
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**Professor David Bellamy**

*"The launch of the 2,500 acre nature reserve is a major step in the creation of a new environment on Teesside. As part of the urban regeneration of Teesside, it is change on a grand scale."*

**The Rt. Hon. Michael Heseltine, MP,**  
Secretary of State  
for the Environment

*"Salmon have been absent from the Tees for over half a century and it is a measure of our faith in the recovery of the Tees that we are going to introduce over a million young salmon into the river during the next five years."*

**The Rt. Hon. Lord Crickhowell**  
Chairman,  
National Rivers Authority

*"I am president of the RSNC, a Partnership of 47 Wildlife Trusts working throughout the UK to secure the future of the countryside and its wildlife. The Partnership is particularly concerned with reversing the fortunes of rivers and wetlands. They are in trouble and urgent action is needed. I welcome this new initiative to restore Teesmouth's wetlands to their former glory."*

**Sir David Attenborough**  
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# How green grows industry

The biggest man-made reserve in the United Kingdom is setting a regional style, Peter Davenport reports

In any competition to select the site for a new nature reserve, Teesside, with its industrial landscape and history as a steel-making and chemicals production centre, would not figure high. Its backcloth of towering chimneys, cooling towers, miles of pipework and flame-spitting furnaces hardly makes it the most attractive destination for even the hardiest creatures.

Yet Teesside is to be the location for the biggest man-made reserve in the United Kingdom. Costing £11 million and stretching over 2,500 acres, seven times the size of Hyde Park, it will be created on land formally owned by ICI on the north bank of the River Tees.

The reserve is perhaps the most imaginative of the flagship schemes of the Teesside Development Corporation. Together with moves to clean up the waters of the Tees and a county-wide initiative on the environment it is part of a concerted attempt to "green" one of Europe's most concentrated industrial areas.

Other improvements include the building of the £50 million Tees Barrage, which will create eleven miles of clean, tide-free waterway, complete with a fish pass to allow new salmon stock to move to and from sea. A riverside site there will

be the new headquarters of the Inspectorate of Pollution from May. Research by the National Rivers Authority shows significant reductions in two key pollutant indicators and the organisation has embarked on a programme to introduce a million salmon into the river over the next five years, the first time the species had been in the Tees in 30 years.

The nature reserve, supported by local authorities, industry, the government and naturalists, will create a series of new natural habitats in reed beds, grasslands, swamp, salt-marsh, water and woodland. The area is already an intrinsically important refuge for birds, waders and wild fowl, attracting significant species including the shelduck, sandpiper, redshank and grey plover.

Its importance is expected to grow further as the reserve takes shape and provides more of the correct habitat for wildlife and wild plants. The design for the reserve has taken ideas from several Dutch schemes, a country recognised as the leading expert in the development of wetland nature reserve.

Michael Heseltine, the environment secretary, described the new nature reserve as part of the wider



Back to nature: Dr Ian Watt, development corporation director, at the £11 million wildlife reserve

urban regeneration of Teesside and called it "change on a grand scale."

Concern about the environmental impact of their activities has led many big industries on Teesside to introduce specific green programmes. ICI is to spend £63 million on an environmental protection programme for the whole of its local operations. It has already spent £5 million to grow seven reed beds, each the size of a football pitch, where bacteria in the roots of the

reeds devour liquid effluent from the Billingham Chemical Products production to purify the water that carries it. Another scheme will build a sulphuric acid recovery plant at Billingham to stop waste acid disposal in the North Sea.

British Steel is investing in its Coatham Marsh nature reserve and Teesside has created a wetland area from rough grassland to act as a feeding and roosting site for wild fowl and populations of waders.

As part of an initiative by the Countryside and Forestry Commissions, a 54 square mile forest, one of 12 being established throughout England, is to be created in the area.

The Cleveland Wildlife Trust is working on schemes to create important new habitats for wildlife along the entire length of the Tees Corridor. The trust places particular importance on involving the local community through its programme of "greenfinger volunteer teams".

## Privatisation that whipped up a storm

The buyer of the port authority is tight-lipped about its plans

The successful bidder in the bloody battle for the Tees and Hartlepool Port Authority is trying to pour oil on troubled waters. Teesside Holdings, which paid £180 million in the country's first privatisation of a trust port, refuses to cast any further light on the dispute that led to the abrupt departure of John Hackney, the port's chief executive, and Charles Wellington, its company secretary.

Nor will it give any indications of its plans to develop the port, which has a strategic importance for the region and which it won at the end of January.

About 40 million tons of cargo passes through in a year and ICI and British Steel are the main customers. Two-way trade in petrochemicals comes to 38 million tons. Nissan is the leading manufacturer of the £2 million cars shipped through the Tees, followed by General Motors, Ford, Citroën, Peugeot and Subaru.

Trusts ports are expected to do well in the private sector. They have already shaken off the shackles of the Dock Labour Scheme, which restricted the use of the workforce but are still subject to restrictions on borrowing and diversification which would be removed in a sell-off. A price of between £120 and £150 million was expected for Cleveland, where turnover runs at about £40 million a year and assets are valued at £60 million.

The owners were good for privatisation, so good that Mr Hackney led an enthusiastic management employee offer to buy out the port for £150 million. The buy-out was the clear favourite but there were three other bids to put before the non-executive members of the port authority who chose the winner.

Although the government had indicated that some preference would be given to buy-out teams in the port privatisations, the Ports Act insisted that all sales must be subject to competitive tender.

Ocean Group, one of Britain's biggest freight management and shipping companies, offered £155 million. It was already a big user of British ports and saw the acquisition of a port as a natural extension of its business. Ocean promised to combine the existing management with its own team and make a significant capital investment.

Teesside Holdings — joint-

ly owned by Powell Duffryn, the engineering group, 3i, the investment specialists, and Humberside Holdings, a private company associated with Powell Duffryn — topped management by £30 million.

Teesside Holdings was, however, itself outbid. Maritime Transport Services, which operates the Thamesport container terminal, offered £210 million. However, it had borrowed heavily to buy Thamesport for £155 million and there were fears that cash generated in Cleveland would be used to fund the southern debt.

The judging panel came down in favour of Teesside Holdings but the sale of the port was delayed in January under a flurry of recrimination. It was claimed that Teesside Holdings had promised a place on its board for a port authority representative, creating a conflict of interest for the adjudicators.

Opponents said the winners had been given an unfair advantage by being allowed to bring in other investors and to increase its offer twice during the contest. Two Teesside Holdings directors had previously been directors of port companies that were put into liquidation, landing the taxpayer with redundancy payments under the Dock Labour Scheme. Stuart Bell, Labour MP for Middlesbrough, called in the House of Commons for them to be disqualified from holding directorships.

Another grouse was that Teesside Holdings was neither the highest bidder nor the one offering the greatest degree of employee participation. Malcolm Rifkind, the transport secretary, however, ruled in favour of Teesside Holdings and opposition collapsed.

Mr Hackney had threatened to seek a judicial review of the decision but on January 31 he decided that "a challenge is no longer a practical proposition."

The new management moved in next day.

RODNEY HOBSON

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## Power row goes on

WHILE work goes at full speed erecting the country's newest power station on Teesside, an argument is growing over how power produced will be fed into the national grid.

The power station, the result of a meeting of minds between Enron, a major US power producer, and the chemicals and polymers division of ICI, is being built on ICI's Wilton site on Teesside, Rodney Hobson writes. The plant is due to be commissioned in April next year.

But Teesside Development Corporation is in a fix. Although the jobs to be created are welcome, the corporation has objected to the proposed route of overhead power lines, which will connect the station to the national grid at Lackenby.

The connection is vital to the project because ICI will be taking only 257 megawatts of power for its Teesside operations. The station, the biggest combining heat and power in the world, will be able to produce 1,875 MW, of which 500 MW will go to Midlands Electricity, 400 MW to Northern Electric and 200 MW each to the regional electricity companies in the South-West and south Wales.

The remaining 150 MW will be used to run the power station and provide back-up.

The corporation fears that the power lines will run too close to other developments in the area, too close to the A19 and too close to the national park. The European Commission has also raised queries over the effect of overhead power lines on the environment.

There will be a public inquiry in May.



Industry with a rural touch: the Teesside steel plant is one of the world's most productive

## Steel still shows strength

BRITISH Steel announced last July that it wanted to go ahead with a new plate mill on Teesside to replace two mills at Scunthorpe and Dalzell, Rodney Hobson writes. Although the company declined to put a price on the investment, saying only that it would be expensive, industry estimates suggest that the new mill could cost between £300 million and £400 million.

The move highlights the continuing strength of Teesside's traditional industries, which may benefit further from a big capital spending programme. The two mills to be replaced are old-fashioned. Economies could also be achieved by putting the facility on to one site that

already had a large modern steel complex.

While British Steel was examining the feasibility of the plans, it became increasingly clear that Europe would continue to over-produce. By November, all capital spending was back in the melting pot. The only schemes getting the nod were those with a rapid payback or involving necessary refurbishment, which is costing British Steel £200 million a year. Plans for Teesside are on hold.

Despite the difficulties, British Steel still provides employment for 6,500 people at its Teesside complex. After the proposed closure at Ravenscraig in Scotland this year, Teesside will be one of only four integrated plants in

Britain. For annual output it is one of the biggest in the world, producing three and a half million tons.

An integrated plant is one that takes the raw materials and produces the finished product. Its materials are imported from the United States, Australia, South America and Africa.

The structural sections, beams, columns and joists for buildings that it turns out make it a world leader. It picked up a technique tried only in Japan for rolling steel from a slab as opposed to a billet and takes the process one stage further. Large pipes to carry oil, gas and water on land and under the sea are made in two mills at Hartlepool.

## Airport still rated highly

Optimism despite a tough year

EVENTS far removed from Teesside made 1992 a difficult year for the region's airport. The Gulf war cut business traffic to a trickle as executives chose to go by road, rail or not to travel at all. The worst loss came from the collapse of the International Leisure Group which, compounded by the outbreak of war in Yugoslavia, led to the cancellation of many holiday charter flights, Ronald Faux writes.

A drop of 27,000 in the number of inclusive tour passengers starting from Teesside in 1990 did not alter the conviction of the Cleveland and Durham county councils, which own and operate the airport, that it is an essential resource for the region.

The first question any potential customer for factory or office space when they arrive to look around is "How do we get in and out?" says John Wainwright, Teesside's marketing and public relations officer.

Much effort has been directed towards attracting more airlines and tour operators and to persuading local manufacturers to use their local airport. At present a lot of air freight passes the end of the runway by road on its way to Heathrow. Although some freight forwarders operate from Teesside, the volume of freight that departs from Teesside is low, concentrated on emergency supplies and high value, light-weight or perishable cargo.

The core business is commuter traffic: 340,000 passengers used Teesside last year. The region was an early participant in the North Sea gas and oil business, which

has established a thriving Air UK service between Teesside and Aberdeen. British Midland operates five flights daily to Heathrow and both Dan Air and Air UK flies to Amsterdam.

Market research is investigating likely demand for scheduled services to Paris, Brussels, Dublin and Belfast, to be operated by British Northern Airlines. Teesside has already clawed back a substantial volume of the holiday traffic lost last year: four tour operators plan to use the airport this season.

Although Teesside has a catchment population of 2.7 million, larger than that of Newcastle, the Tyne-side airport has a larger base and is firmly established. To the south, the Leeds-Bradford airport offers stiff competition with Manchester International another powerful draw close by. Even so, the new vitality on Teesside and the 500,000 residents for whom the airport is the most convenient take-off point for business or holidays should ensure continued growth.

Taking into account the potential for freight and the expected rise in passenger traffic, an extension to the runway has been considered. To allow fully laden and fully fuelled 747s to operate from Teesside, another 2,000ft would be needed, at a cost of between £8 million and £10 million. The plan awaits a warmer economic climate but until dreams of transatlantic flight can turn into reality, Teesside is content to be part of the regional transport scene providing a valuable spoke to established international hubs.

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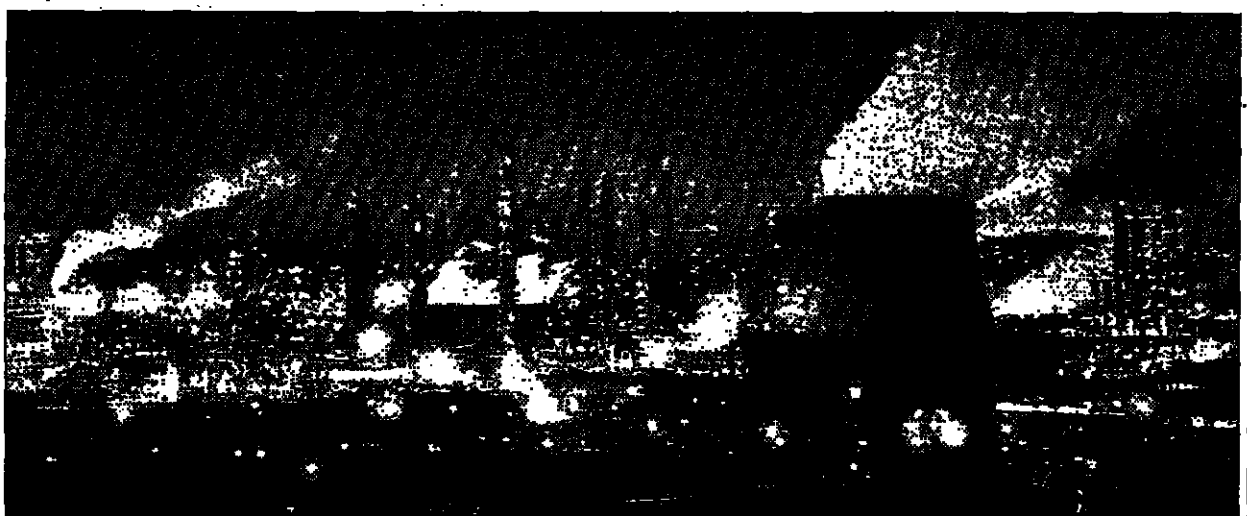
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ICI's plant on Teesside. Now the company is investing £37 million in a new plant for a popular vegetarian product.

## Multi-million pound mushroom

THE COWS and sheep are rocking and rolling with joy on Teesside. At least, they are in the television advertisement, because Cleveland is where ICI produces Quorn, its fast-growing vegetable meat.

ICI decided in November to invest £37 million in a new production facility for Quorn on Teesside because of the demand for the product, Rodney Hobson writes. That will increase production capacity from 1,200 tons a year to 7,000 tons, enabling Marlow Foods, a fully owned subsidiary, to make Quorn available nationally and to take the first steps in selling Quorn to the world.

Work has started on the new facilities, at Stokesley and Belasis, where 100 people are already employed, and is scheduled for completion by the end of next year.

Quorn is made from *fusarium graminearum*, a tiny distant relative to the mushroom. Although it has existed for thousands of years, it was discovered

only in the early 1960s as a result of a search for a new source of protein.

Apart from being acceptable to vegans, it has the appeal of being low in fat and a good source of protein and dietary fibre. Quorn contains no cholesterol and is capable of absorbing the flavour from herbs and spices it is cooked with.

ICI has put more than 25 years into learning how to produce Quorn in sufficiently large quantities.

Marlow Foods provides the ideal growing conditions within a fermenter. Carbohydrate is added in the form of a solution of glucose together with oxygen, nitrogen and minerals. This liquid

medium supports rapid growth under carefully controlled conditions.

After a few days, harvesting starts. Quorn and excess liquid are pasteurised to stop further growth. The liquid is then filtered off, leaving sheets of Quorn that look similar to uncooked pastry. Vegetable flavours and a small amount of egg white are added to the product before it is cooked. Finally, the Quorn is sliced, diced or shredded.

Quorn has been marketed since 1984 but its success is comparatively recent. Sales have increased fivefold, from £3 million a year to £15 million, over the past three years. It is now available in all major supermarket chains in more than 60 ready-made meals but it can also be bought as an original ingredient.

International expansion has begun by selling the product in Belgium and The Netherlands. A supermarket chain planned to put Quorn into 30 Belgian outlets but it was so popular it is now on sale in all 120 stores.

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Watson Hawksley is undertaking the design of the Tees Barrage and of the associated works which include an international canoe slalom, navigation lock and fish pass.

This is part of the Teesside Development Corporation's plan to regenerate the Teesside site and to enhance the quality of recreational and amenity pursuits along the River Tees corridor in Stockton.

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# Chariot swings on as RFU reappoints driver Cooke to manage England until 1995 World Cup

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

THE Rugby Football Union (RFU) confirmed yesterday that Geoff Cooke would remain as England team manager up to, and including, the 1995 World Cup. But Cooke, under whose aegis England have won two grand slams, will be stepping back from the "hands-on" coaching contact he has had with the squad since taking up the honorary post in October 1987.

Since Cooke's appointment, England have won 27 of 38 internationals and drawn one. Four of the ten defeats have been to Australia, one each to New Zealand and Argentina and four in the five nations' championship. He has helped to develop a squad that can be ranked third in the world.

The RFU is working out more specific terms of reference for Cooke's position, which was newly created in 1987, but that is regarded as a formality. Already, Cooke, aged 50, in discussion with Don Rutherford, the RFU technical director, has worked out a programme

covering the next three years and now that his position is confirmed, he will put together a management team.

"I think it's likely I will have less of a role in practical coaching than in the last four years," Cooke said. "The time has come for me to step aside a bit and we will probably be looking to appoint an assistant coach." Thus far, Cooke has shared, first with Roger Uttley and then Dick Best, the coaching of a side which reached the World Cup final last November as well as taking the two grand slams.

Best, who has been surprised at the time he has had to devote to coaching the senior side as distinct from England B, is examining whether his domestic and business life will permit him to continue, if invited. The third member of the present management is John Elliot, who has yet to confirm whether he could serve through until 1995.

There is little doubt of Best's enthusiasm for the coaching task. "We are trying

to develop a style," he said. "We are convinced we have perfected it, but we are trying to carry the ball in the hand a bit more and ask questions of the opposing defence."

The programme up to 1995 embraces the B tour to New Zealand this summer, a development tour to North America in 1993 — the same year as the British Isles tour to New Zealand — and a senior tour to South Africa in 1994, on the basis that the International Rugby Football Board will confirm next month that the 1995 World Cup will be played there.

Cooke lays great emphasis on the importance of this summer's tour, which begins when the party flies out on June 2. "We were delighted that the team achieved their own 'mini' grand slam and we hope the under-21s will carry on the good work at the end of this season," he said. "But New Zealand will be a proving ground which we need badly and I am confident we can pick up four or five players who will be ready to step into the senior side next season."

The touring party will be announced on April 13 and will almost certainly include two members of the senior squad, Martin Bayfield and Martin Hynes, who the management believe would benefit from the experience.

Some members of the side that beat Wales on Saturday have yet to confirm their plans for next season, but Cooke has not ruled out selecting for the international against South Africa at Twickenham in November players who do not intend to be available for the 1993 championship.

The RFU has registered its displeasure over offensive behaviour by members of Wasp and Cambridge University while on tour. Both clubs have taken internal disciplinary measures after the Cambridge LX Club, the university second XV, caused damage and took trophies during a visit to Llandovery Castle in the Netherlands and Wasp players exposed themselves after a ten-a-side tournament in Malaysia.

## Italy see way of filling the gap

By BRYAN STILES

ITALY want to break into the "magic circle" of the five nations' championship, without actually taking part in the competition. The Italian Federation has its eyes on the free Saturday that each of the five nations' countries enjoys during the championship, using it to improve on the team's spirited performance in the World Cup.

Italy already play France in the Fina tournament for continental countries, and have contacted the four home unions pleading for a chance to play international matches against them on their free days.

The Wales and Scotland unions have expressed an interest, and the Italians are waiting to hear from England and Ireland. However, the English seem happy with the status quo, whereby the B

team plays the Italian national side masquerading as Italy B and still beats them.

One advantage in having a non-championship country involved is that it would help to keep home union teams at match fitness during the competition. It might have solved a problem for, say, the Irish, who held a trial on their free day last Saturday.

Maurizio Mondelli, the president of the Italian Federation, took the opportunity afforded by the England B team's visit to Rome at the weekend to further Italy's cause. "We could play the home countries at home one year and away the next," he said, "or perhaps we could play them every other season. It would be a great help." Romania could alternate with Italy if the proposal is accepted.

## ICE HOCKEY

### Panthers forget form book

By NORMAN DE MESQUITA

NOTTINGHAM Panthers may be lying second in the Heineken League but, in the penultimate weekend of the regular season, they appeared to forget the form book.

When victories should, arguably, have been theirs, Nottingham's opponents to lose at home to Humberside Sea-hawks and away to Whiteley Warriors.

With the eight premier division play-off places already decided, perhaps it is proving difficult for teams to motivate themselves. Nottingham, for example, have secured second place — thus avoiding Durham Wasps in the lead-up to Wembley — in spite of those defeats.

Nevertheless, they went close in both games. Humberside scored twice in the final period for their 6-6 win on Saturday and Robert Abel scoring Whiteley's winner with only 90 seconds to go on Sunday.

Billingham Bombers left it even later in their 7-6 win over Ayr Raiders with Scott Morrison scoring their winner with only 47 seconds remaining. Bracknell Bees managed something they had not done for nearly four months when they won at home. Their victims were the Warriors, whose cause was not helped by the penchant for taking penalties. Ten of Bracknell's 11 goals came on power-play situations. Richard Laplante, of Fife Flyers, meanwhile took his points total past the 200 mark.

RESULTS: Heineken League: Premier division: Ayr Raiders 6, Billingham Bombers 7; Bracknell Bees 11, Whiteley Warriors 6; Cardiff Devils 12, Mansfield Pioneers 3; Nottingham Panthers 6, Humberside Sea-hawks 6; Billingham Bombers 2, Mansfield Pioneers 6; Norwich Panthers 7, Durham Wasps 7; Whiteley Warriors 6, Nottingham Panthers 4; First division: Doncaster Knights 10, Telford Metros 5; Fife Flyers 9, Milton Keynes Kings 3; South Jets 5, Lee Valley Lions 5; Telford Tigers 5, Doncaster Knights 3; Blackburn Blackcats 6, Milton Keynes Kings 16; Lee Valley Lions 10, Doncaster Knights 15; Telford Metros 4, Telford Metros 4.

## Trainers divulge festival fancies

By RICHARD EVANS  
RACING CORRESPONDENT

IN THE run-up to Royal Ascot last June, *The Times* asked leading Flat trainers for two selections. Their recommendations provided a host of winners including Satin Flower (12-1) and Sikeston (9-1).

Trainers' views are never more important than at the Cheltenham festival where picking winners is notoriously difficult.

With that in mind, leading trainers on both sides of the Irish Sea were asked to nominate a nap from their own yard and make one selection from another stable. Here are their views:

**KIM BAILEY:** Nap: Captain Frisk (National Hunt Chase). "He ran well at Newbury recently and is just coming into form. Four miles will suit him." Selection: Henry Mann (Ritz Club Chase).

**IAN BALDING:** Nap: Crystal Spirit (Stayers' Hurdle). "His recent Newbury win should have put him spot on." Selection: Morley Street (Champion Hurdle).

**TOBY BALDING:** Nap: Morley Street (Champion Hurdle). "He's the one they've all got to beat. He's in very good order." Selection: Waterloo Boy (Queen Mother Champion Chase).

**NICKY HENDERSON:** Nap: Tinnyland (Arkle Trophy). Selection: Royal Gait (Champion Hurdle). "He's a high-class horse. You would normally expect inexperience to count against him but there are enough doubts about the others."

**DAVID BARONS:** Nap: Auction Law (Kim Muir Fulke Walwyn Cup). "I think he will run terribly well." Selection: Fiddway (Champion Hurdle).

**DAVID ELSWORTH:** Nap: Fragrant Dawn (Arkle Trophy). Selection: King Credo (County Hurdle).

**JOSH GIFFORD:** Nap: Deep Sensation (Arkle Tro-



Henderson: sweet on Tinnyland's chance in today's Waterford Castle Arkle Trophy at Cheltenham

phy). "When he was brought down at Kempton, I thought it would frighten him. Instead it made a man of him." Selection: Waterloo Boy (Queen Mother Champion Chase).

**MICK O'TOOLE:** Nap: Bishop's Staff (National Hunt Chase). "He was very impressive when winning at Punchestown recently and will be ridden by top amateur Philip Dempsey." Selection: Trianman Square (Festival Bumper).

**MARTIN PIPE:** Nap: four miles." Selection: Honest Word (County Hurdle).

**DAVID NICHOLSON:** Nap: Thetford Forest (Sun Alliance Hurdle). "He's won four out of five and when he was beaten he didn't get the run of the race." Selection: Royal Gait (Champion Hurdle).

**TIM THOMSON JONES:** Nap: Keep Talking (National Hunt Chase). "He's improving all the time and should appreciate

Minnehoma (Sun Alliance Chase). "Although he could do with some rain." Selection: Remittance Man (Queen Mother Champion Chase).

**JENNY PITMAN:** Nap: Golden Freeze (Mildmay of Flete Chase). Selection: Carville's Hill.

**GORDON RICHARDS:** Nap: Randolph Place (Stayers' Hurdle). "He ran well at Haydock over an inadequate two miles recently and he's a nice price." Selection: Morley Street (Champion Hurdle).

**OLIVER SHERWOOD:** Nap: Young Pique (Arkle Trophy). "Obviously Deep

Sensation and Tinnyland are dangers but he has the beating of Deep Sensation and the ground will be perfect." Selection: Trapper John (Stayers' Hurdle).

**MARK TOMPKINS:** Nap: Halkopos (Supreme Novices' Hurdle). "He should take the festival in his stride but would like a bit of cut." Selection: Royal Gait (Champion Hurdle).

**DERMOT WELD:** Nap: Fortune And Fame (Supreme Novices' Hurdle). "He's a very decent horse who has not been overfaced over hurdles." Selection: Trianman Square (Festival Bumper).

## 3.50 SOUTH DURHAM OPEN HUNTER CHASE

(Amateurs: £1,150; 3m 210yds) (7 runners)

1	015-115	PADDY HAYTON 11 (D.F.G.S.) (Mrs M Wares) S Leadbetter 11-12-10	R Shale 92
2	4115-15	ROYAL GREEK 24 (F.G.S.) (R Jones) P Morris 10-12-10	R Jones 79
3	04001-0	GONER HOUSE 8 (P) (M McCarty) M McCarty 7-12-7	N F Smith 71
4	05047	DOUGHTY NEEL 1018 (P.F.G.S.) (C Heston) C Heston 11-12-0	S Heston 71
5	P/P	LETHAL WEAPON 6 (S Robinson) S Robinson 6-12-0	S Robinson 71
6	B-P	SECOND COUSIN 8 (Mrs S Brannan) Mrs S Brannan 6-12-0	S Brannan 71
7	5	SCALLY'S LADY 21 (S Robinson) S Robinson 7-11-9	S Robinson 71

BETTING: 4-5 Paddy Hayton, 5-1 Scally's Lady, 5-1 Royal Greek, 12-1 Second Cousin, 16-1 Goner House, 20-1 Lethal Weapon, 25-1 Doughty Neel.

1991: PADDY HAYTON 10-11-8 R Shale (14-1) S Leadbetter 10-11-8

## 4.30 BUTTERWICK HURDLE CHASE (€2,355; 2m) (4 runners)

1	42558	MAREDO 3 (D.F.G.S.) (Mrs F Waller) F Waller 11-12-0	B Storey 98
2	51122	LANDSKY 17 (D.F.S.) (D Neale) W Storey 5-10-12	D Neale 91
3	22501	AINSTY FOX 7 (S.G.S.) (C Burton) B Burton 6-10-2 (best)	F Murrigh 91
4	14330	POSITIVE ACTION 19 (D.P.) (G Campbell) M Barnes 6-10-0	C Grant 86

Long handicap: Positive Action 9-10.

BETTING: 5-4 Ainsty Fox, 9-4 Maredo, 3-1 Landsky, 6-1 Positive Action.

1991: UNEX-PLAINED 6-11-5 J Callaghan (2-1) G Moore 5-11-5

## 5.00 JOHN JOYCE NOVICES HURDLE (€1,826; 2m) (10 runners)

1	40148	OUR SLIMBRIDGE 17 (D.P.) (Mrs S Foster) C Williams 4-11-10	A Carroll 86
2	04102-2	CHAIN SHOT 167 (B.F.) (M McCarty) M McCarty 7-11-0	R Fahey 82
3	05047	ROYALTY 7 (T Dawson) Mrs J Stanley 5-11-3	A Mulholland 81
4	00002	NICHOLAS MARK 15 (J O'Grady) J O'Grady 5-10-7	D Byrne 80
5	00535	LE PELLEY'S ISLE 31 (M Barnes) M Barnes 5-10-6	C Grant 85
6	05421	SOVEREIGN NICH 7 (D.G.S.) (N Miller) N Miller 4-10-5	J Supple 77
7	22500	COUGAR 21 (Southwell Racing Ltd) Mrs S Austin 6-10-0	D Williams 81
8	0-05074	BUCKRA MELLISUGA 6 (P Pinner) W A Stephenson 6-10-0	K Johnson 89
9	003-600	ROSEWELL 99 (W Waterhouse) R Lamb 6-10-0	Miss S Lamb 84
10	00-0000	THE ANNOUNCER 98 (B) (J Wedel) J Wade 6-10-0	K Jones 84

Long handicap: Buckra Mellisuga 6-12, Rosewell 9-11, The Announcer 9-11, Cougar, 10-11, Royalist, 12-11, others.

1991: BEAU NASH 7-11-3 Mr N Wilson (10-1) A Slinger 9-11

## COURSE SPECIALISTS

Trainers	Winners	Runners	Per cent	Jockeys	Winners	Rides	Per cent
M H Baskerville	21	28	75.0	D Byrne	48	222	21.6
Jimmy FitzGerald	16	55	27.3	D Byrne	11	52	21.2
Mae V Aconley	11	30	33.3	P Mearns	8	34	23.5
Mae V Aconley	11	30	33.3	P Mearns	8	34	23.5
Mae V Aconley	11	30	33.3	P Mearns	8	34	23.5
W A Stephenson	65	332	19.6	A Murrigh	16	120	13.3
S Leadbetter	3	17	17.6	K Johnson	6	46	13.0

□ Racegoers driving from London to Cheltenham were urged by police yesterday to leave early and follow a special route devised to make the journey easier. Drivers are asked to leave the M40 at junction 8 and follow the A40 to Burford before joining the A424. Motorists should then follow the well-signed route via Toddington, Winchcombe, over Cleve Hill and Southern Lane into the north car park at Prestbury Park.

## Radical Views gives McKie century

POINT-TO-POINT BY BRIAN BEEL

TWO of the beaten favourites from Leicester's hunter chase meeting earlier in the week turned out at the Bicester point-to-point on Saturday with mixed success.

Radical Views won an odds-on favourite should, in the second division of the confined race, and in so doing gave Ian McKie his 100th winner in point-to-points.

Credit Cut, however, disappointed his backers. In the previous division he looked to have every chance half a mile out but faded and Jon Trice-Rolph pulled him up lame after the last. The race was won by Nathan Shaylor on Brother Michael.

Another Leicester runner, True Bloom, went in the open and was one of two winners from Jim Tarry, Fine Lace

having been successful in the PPOA mares race.

Zoe Turner, off the mark last week following an early season wobble, scored again when Rubies Choice landed the odds in the novices' race at the Dunston.

To the relief of Philip Schofield, who had been beaten in the two opening races on the favourites, Sweatshirt defied a 7lb penalty at the Silverton to win the restricted.

Mike Felton rode a double here and Justin Farthing had a confidence booster for his next outing, at Cheltenham on Rushing Wild, when And There's More led on well to win the Land Rover qualifier.

Seven of the horses who completed in the RMC qualifier at the North Ladbury were disqualified.

With a marking disc up at the twelfth, after a mishap on the first circuit, Alison Dave was the only rider to jump the fence on Stephen's Pet who finished first. After so many similar incidents, even the most inexperienced rider should know that, despite whatever carnage lies ahead, every jump has to be taken.

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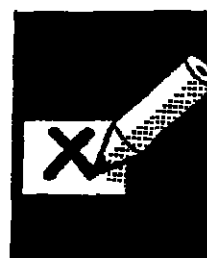
# PARENTS

Television and video games empty the playgrounds



# LIFE & TIMES

TUESDAY MARCH 10 1992



# LAW

How the parties spend, spend, spend to buy the vote

## TV heaven with a bottom line

Was there a golden age of television?

Patrick Stoddart wonders if the medium is suffering from cost cuts, political shifts or plain old age

Each Saturday millions of viewers are putting their TV dinners on their laps and settling down to a feast of *Neelie Barker*, *Upstairs, Downstairs*, *Ken Dodd*, *Edward and Mrs Simpson*... they are in TV Heaven, the name given by Channel 4 to its season of ancient and sometimes crumbling television programmes.

To be sure, many of the viewers who tune in to this sight-in are so far past the age of consent they can hardly remember what they were consenting to, but when other channels are showing Noel Edmonds, *Family Fortunes* and peaktime repeats of *Columbo*, one does wonder whether there was, after all, a golden age.

Was television better in the 1960s and 1970s, or will we in 25 years' time be sitting in front of our 6ft wall screens, watching old episodes of *Bergerac* and muttering the same old mantra? The answer, in both cases, is probably "yes", because many people in television — and not only those who were there when Dixon of Dock Green was a mere constable — find it hard to see how standards can be held even at present levels in an industry becoming convinced that the only line to be remembered is the bottom line.

For some, the strongest evidence of that is the departure of David Plowright from Granada television, makers of those twin icons of quality television, *Brideshead Revisited* and *The Jewel in the Crown*. Plowright quit after a disagreement over programme costs, but once he had done his job as a figurehead to help Granada keep its franchise, say the cynics, Plowright had outlived his usefulness anyway.

Bill Cotton, formerly head of light entertainment, controller of BBC1 and managing director of BBC TV, is now chairman of the independent production company Noel Gay. If the years that embraced *All Grown Up*, *The Lids*, *TWG* and *Monty Python* were a golden age, he was one of the people who presided over them, and he says they can never return. "We can't survive by constantly harking back to *Brideshead*", he says, "and there will always be marvellous programmes — look at *The Camomile Lawn*. It's the everyday kind of programmes that are suffering, and it's through them that a climate of excellence is maintained."

"When started, the opportunity to do things better was still there. Executives made decisions earlier, which gave you more time to think and plan, and longer to produce. The end position for really great motivators, like Huw Wheldon, was that we should make the best programmes we could — not what they cost. These days, too many executives want to keep their options open until the last moment."

One danger, perhaps, is that fewer programmes are now made "in-house". Once upon a golden



Giants of television: from left, the BBC's fiercely competitive Bryan Cowgill and free-thinker Hugh Greene, Huw Wheldon the great motivator, Channel 4's Jeremy Isaacs and Granada's David Plowright

age the BBC and the ITV companies all kept staffs large enough to produce everything they needed within their own walls. Programme-makers who knew their incomes and pension funds were taken care of for the next few years could more easily turn their minds to the business of making television programmes. They were also able to inhale the atmosphere of an organisation that made documentaries, dramas, comedy and cricket programmes along the corridor. And the sense of loyalty that induced was fearsome — as head of sport, Bryan Cowgill (one of the great BBC movers of the early 1970s) was so competitive that he once refused to acknowledge his opposite number at ITV in a lift.

Then Channel 4 came along to promote excellence outside the walls and commission its entire output from independent sources. Channel 4, first under Jeremy Isaacs and then Michael Grade, certainly threw up new ideas and new people to make them, but now the process has spread.

The government has decreed that both the BBC and ITV must commission a minimum of 25 per cent of their programmes from independents, and many of the new ITV companies which start broadcasting next year will buy in nearly all their material, rather than run their own production operation. The collegiate atmosphere which bred the stuff of *TV Heaven*, in other words, may soon cease to exist.

"As an independent myself these

days," Cotton says, "I'm not going to say we don't know how to make programmes. But young people coming into this business won't be able to gain the experience we did, because they are working in a vacuum, and they never know where their next job is coming from. These days they open the champagne when they get a contract to make something, not when they get it right."

It would be a mistake to believe that television programmes always improve with age. Verity Lambert began her career on *Armchair Theatre*, went on to make *Dr Who*, *The Sweeney* and *Minder*, and is most recently famous for Channel 4's blithely *GBH*. Of *TV Heaven* she says: "Some of it is good, some of it is just old. And some of it is terribly slow."

"The grammar of television has changed tremendously, with the constant development of technology, and it would be daft to think you could run even the best television of the 1960s and expect audiences to like it so much. The education bandits have gone too far — young people no longer have the attention span to cope with serious ideas."

What would this mean for such

boundary-breaking drama strands as the BBC's *Play for Today*, or ITV's *Armchair Theatre*? They simply wouldn't be tolerated, says Lambert: "Those departments produced some of the best writing of their age — playwrights we now consider to be a vital part of the cultural bloodstream. But the public wouldn't turn on a single play nowadays, because they lack the powers of concentration. That's a generalisation — we were very heartened by the number of young people who liked *GBH*, but that was a serial, which is a more familiar form these days."

She agrees with Cotton, though, that producers take fewer chances now. "When I began, you were encouraged to be original, and while there are still people within the BBC and Channel 4 trying to do original work, the commercial constraints make that much, much more difficult."

Even if television's problems lie with the rise of the accountant-as-programme-supervisor, many politicised programme-makers (and despite the paranoia of all governments they comprise a tiny minority of executives in television) smell a whiff of Whitehall vengeance in all this, and they may be

right. There is nothing that Harold Wilson would have loved to do more dearly than punish the BBC for *That Was The Week That Was*, for minister-shaming social dramas and such impertinences as the *Panorama* programme, "Yesterday's Men", which took the unprecedented step of questioning whether Wilson's cabinet was fit to govern. In those more liberal days, Wilson could not afford to let his boot be seen on the neck of such free-thinking men as Hugh Greene, the BBC's most innovative director-general, but what he failed to achieve by force may have been managed since by the force majeure of economic manipulation.

By tightening the BBC's purse strings, and by delivering ITV into the hands of entrepreneurs anxious to win back the price of their franchise bids, the Thatcher government perhaps succeeded in stifling the spirit of independence that broadcasters once held dear. The Major administration was more open to calls for a softening of the Thatcherite broadcasting act, but most of its financial ramifications were left in place, and it would be naive to imagine that any future government, Labour or Tory, would consider it wise to turn the clock back.

Maybe, though, it is all much simpler than that. Maybe television had more impact then than now because there were fewer alternatives to it — Chinese restaurants and curry houses were in short supply, and nobody could

rent video films or reach for the Nintendo if they didn't like what the channels had to offer.

And maybe the golden era of television has less to do with the fact that there was more gold about than that there were more good ideas. However hard a time the *Dimblebys et al* give politicians and businessmen, they cannot shock the nation as profoundly as David Frost did when he submitted Emil Savundra to "trial by television", simply because nobody had ever done it before.

Dennis Potter might still have some great television drama in him, but he wrote his first when television was young, and when there was nothing to compare him to. However good *The Bill* gets, Z

Cars got there first, and not even the best-written diatribe against social injustice could have the impact of *Cathy Come Home*, because that play set the agenda. It might be that television is losing its powers, not because of the new nightmares of cost-cutting and political bullying, but just because it is growing old.

# INSIDE

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TOMORROW  
Barryshnikov back in Europe

Young people no longer have the attention span to cope with serious ideas

## Sackcloth (blue) and ashes for Lent

With the first daffodil trumpeting beneath my window, my thoughts turn, temptingly, towards my wardrobe. An adolescent, atavistic voice whispers: "Go on, give that credit card another spin and smarten yourself up. Show them that you're not past it. Deck yourself out in some snappy finery." Lord, give me the strength in this Lenten season to resist this indulgence, eschew this folly. Grant me the wisdom to know that it leads only to embarrassment and yet another blue suit.

From the depths of my true middle self, I can say that the last thing I want to worry about is clothes. I am at a time of life when I can take a big worry or two. I am prepared to shoulder my share of anxiety over European Monetary Union. I do not wish to be troubled by the cut of a lapel. Why, then, do I let it bother my head that I seem to have become a style victim, the object of sniggers among those clever ones up in the Smoke?

Your best friends may be unwilling to tell you about deficiencies in your personal hygiene but mine seem to take a positive delight in telling me that my clothes are a joke. Last summer my sister-in-law said that I had become "a byword for stylelessness". About the same

time, a young woman of fashion told me that the reason she was unwilling to be seen eating her lunch with me was not, primarily, because my opinions about feminism had made me persona non grata in our circle of acquaintances, but because she couldn't bear to look across the table and see me wearing, yet again, one of the Brooks Brothers button-down numbers I bought in the mid-1980s, believing them to be the last word in cosmopolitan sophistication.

The best place for fashion is off my back. In a Dream State, I would want to put on the first garments which come to hand every morning and I would want them to be the same as yesterday. What I want, in other words, is a habit — a costume of unassailable taste combining a soldierly and scholarly restraint with a dash of metropolitan knowingsness. What I have instead is a rack of dark blue suits.

For private purposes — days of work at home, weekends, evenings with very close friends, trips to the shops, afternoons in the garden — I have a perfect habit. It has been tried over 30 years. I am it and it is me; and I would no more recognise myself without a bomber jacket (leather or wool), a pair of

MIDLIFE  
Neil Lyndon ponders the state of his wardrobe



Levis, a pair of sneakers, a T-shirt and a thick cotton workshirt than I would feel myself to be properly dressed without a pair of navy blue Marks & Spencer underpants, or the Japanese watch I bought 11 years ago with which I have never found fault. When I am laid out for burial, I expect that those objects will be the last removed from my corpse.

I need something equivalently

uniform, utilitarian, anonymous for my occasional and half-hearted forays abroad into a life which might be termed social. This little nuisance has been nagging at the back of my mind for nearly 20 years, and I can't say that I am any nearer solving it.

In a particularly manic phase of the mid-1970s I did think of designing a costume and having several suits of clothes. All black, made up to the same pattern. In wool, cotton and linen to allow for all the seasons. It would be a composite of Dr Jager's system with Shavian cuts and Maoist collars, making me look like a cross between Zhou Enlai and Havelock Ellis. It must have been about that time that I settled, instead, for my first blue suit.

I have just checked my wardrobe and counted eight suits of dark blue hanging there. The earliest dates from my wedding in 1977. The latest was bought last year when, surrendering to spring fancies, I decided that I should emulate those smart boys I know who were twirling around in their unstructured jackets and wide-hipped trousers. I emerged from the shop, nearly £300 lighter, with garments of matching hue which caused my wife to ask "Did you really need another blue suit?"

The number of my blue suits is exceeded only by that of the black socks in my drawer. Counting them would be an effort like numbering the plates in Hearsy's San Simeon. In my shoe cupboard are six pairs of black shoes.

I am stuck with this stuff. None of it is ever going to wear out. Costly and well-made, it was meant to suit a professional gent for a year or two of taxing and energetic business life. I give my outfits an outing to London about once a month. If my son marries in 15 years or so, I might, given a gust or two, wear my own wedding tackle to the ceremony, looking like my own father in his demob suit and inviting giggles from the bridesmaids over the gentle flares and the 5in lapels.

What to do, what to do? The answer appears — as it does increasingly in this middle — to be "do nothing". Why resist? Why fight? So I look like an unmodish old relic, an embarrassment alike to stylish friends and trendy children: what better fun can I give them? To submit to that humbling is not much of a cross to tote for Lent, and, certainly, it will cost me less than another blue suit.

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TOMORROW  
Single life: Lynne Truss



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# Monarch at home in the glens

Andrew Gibbon Williams on two Scottish exhibitions of watercolours originally commissioned by Queen Victoria

Beneath the surface of the recent television documentary *Elizabeth R* the essential Scottishness of the Windsor clan pulsed like a pedal note. The Queen was caught in relaxed and cheerful mood introducing her grandchildren to pony trekking at Balmoral; at the Gillies Ball she proved herself to be a premier division eightsome reeler.

The Queen Mother, a born and bred Scot, is largely responsible for encouraging the present Royal Family in its Scottish predilections. But the tradition actually dates back to the youthful Victoria's discovery of the Highlands in the 1840s. By the middle of the next decade the Queen and Prince Consort were able to holiday *en famille* in the baronial home they had built for themselves on Balmoral. Decked out in assorted tartans, thistle-strewn chintzes everywhere, the concept of "Balmorality" was born.

Several views of Balmoral's interiors are included in an absorbing exhibition of watercolours at the Queen's official Scottish residence, the Palace of Holyroodhouse. Inspired by an album of watercolours given to them by King Louis Philippe as a memento of their visit to Paris in 1843, Victoria and Albert began commissioning pictures of their own numerous homes. These they assembled into bound volumes which accounts for their excellent state of preservation. By the time of the Prince Consort's death in 1861 there were some 600 or so individual pictures contained in nine albums.

Predictably, the overwhelming impression is one of breathtaking opulence. A post-christening banquet in the Picture Gallery at Buckingham Palace is interpreted by the Belgian artist Louis Haghe as a luminous fairytale, the dazzle of gasoliers and candlelight creating an ethereal effect.

Gold plates on show for the Garter Banquet shimmer against the Gothic tracery of St George's Hall, Windsor, in Joseph Nash's

depiction of the arrival of the French king. Uniforms and crinolines jostle on the Grand Staircase of Buckingham Palace in a frothy rococo scene painted by Eugene Lami, Louis Philippe's court painter.

More compelling, however, are the interiors in which stray domestic details impart an intimate sense of everyday habitation to a room. A baby's highchair and toy horse, for example, strike a surreal note against the chinoiserie of the Pavilion Breakfast Room at Buckingham Palace. Much as Victoria abhorred the morals and taste of the Regent she evidently felt happy enough to allow her children to play amidst his gorgeous fantasy.

Numbing the carefree spirit which predominates in the majority of watercolours, however, is the morbid sentimentality which has curiously become synonymous with the Widow of Windsor. Festooned with flowers, the Queen's birthday display at Osborne House, ironically, like a modern funeral parlour, a little more than six months later, Albert was dead. George Greig's watercolours of Holyroodhouse, commissioned as a memorial to the Prince, are fittingly sombre although, it should be said, the Queen always found her apartment there gloomy.

As for taste in décor, a heavy-handed eclecticism is remarkable in most of the original Victorian interiors. For the swaggering grandeur against which most state occasions were conducted Victoria was indebted to that most enthusiastic of Royal interior decorators, George IV. When she and Albert did it their way, as at Balmoral, they achieved a kind of bizarre, gaudy vulgarity.

For aficionados of tartan there is a further treat at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery where Queen Victoria's obsessive desire to catalogue every aspect of her life is epitomised in an exhibition of watercolour portraits by Kenneth MacLeay.

Victoria's adoration of her



Opulence touched by a sense of everyday domesticity: Queen Victoria's Birthday Table, Osborne House, 1861, by James Roberts. Reproduced by gracious permission of the Queen. Original in the Royal Library at Windsor Castle

Highlanders is well known. In her reclusive years of unpopularity, scurrilous rumours circulated about her relationship with her strong-minded servant John Brown. In the 1860s she commissioned MacLeay, whose career as a miniaturist had been subverted by the advent of photography, to paint her favourite Highland retainers. Eventually the project blossomed into a full-scale encyclopaedic survey of the clans, which was published to great acclaim in the 1870s as *The Highlanders of Scotland*.

It is not difficult to sympathise

with the Queen's admiration for MacLeay; he succeeds in conveying striking likenesses of his subjects: accuracy of form and truth of character are there in equal measure.

MacLeay's bravura watercolour technique, however, disguises a subtler, more profound artist than might be inferred from the Highlanders series. For MacLeay was — as the gallery's new informative monograph describes — a member of that other populous clan: Victorian artists whom fate decreed would never fulfil their potential. Angst and penury being

thrown in just for good measure.

Several early miniatures (a particularly fine one of Jane Baillie Welsh, future wife of Thomas Carlyle) testify to MacLeay's precocious ability and the dual influence of Raeburn and Lawrence. In his line there is a sensitivity which is reminiscent of Ingres, with whose pencil drawings of tourists in Rome, which were made half a century earlier, MacLeay's portraits can be seen to have much in common.

Ultimately though, he deserves to be left in the historical niche which the colleague who recom-

mended him for his *magnum opus*, Noel Paton, carved out for him: he is the "Highlander of the Highlanders".

● Royal residences of the Victorian era, an exhibition at the Palace of Holyroodhouse, Edinburgh (031-556 1096), continues until March 21. Mon-Sat 9.30am-5.15pm. Then it can be seen at Aberdeen Art Gallery from May 30 to August 29.

● Kenneth MacLeay: landscapes, portraits and miniatures, at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh (031-556 8921), continues until April 20. Open Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, Sunday 2-5pm.

## TELEVISION

### Odd life of an enigma

Alan Turing has always been a fascinating figure. Gauche, eccentric, and homosexual, he emerged from an uncomprehending public school as a mathematician of genius. At Cambridge and later as a leading member of the code-breaking team at Bletchley Park, he blazed fiercely for a few brilliant years, then died alone biting into an apple laced with cyanide.

Drawing on Andrew Hodges's superb biography of Turing, recently republished by Vintage, Horizon last night on BBC2 told the story of an odd life. Photographs of Turing are pitifully few and films non-existent. His greatest achievements are difficult to convey, residing as they do in the world of mathematical logic and cryptography.

Fortunately for producer Christopher Sykes, there are survivors who remember Turing as an endearing colleague, including a fellow worker at Bletchley Park, Joan Clarke, to whom he became engaged before warier thoughts prevailed. A profoundly honest man, he made no secret to her of his sexual leanings, though to describe them as "tendencies" might have been understating it a bit. Few other colleagues had any idea, which is fortunate, because a positive vetting system that had excluded Turing from secret work would have denied Britain the vital insights which helped break the Enigma code and win the war.

Later, after Turing had joined the National Physical Laboratory in the expectation that he would be allowed to build Britain's first electronic computer with his own hands and left in indignation when he found he was only expected to design it, he did come into painful contact with the law.

Answering a charge of gross indecency with a young man, he jovially remarked to a friend that the worst he could get was seven years, while doing the same thing with a sheep might have earned him ten. In fact, he was put on probation on condition that he was treated with hormones designed to kill his interest in sex.

He left no explanation for his death. Was he fed up with the futile pursuit of the police, anxious to trap him into fresh indiscretions? Did he, as one friend suggests, simply recognise that his days as a creative mathematician were probably over? Or was it, as his mother always believed, an accident resulting from his notoriously careless style of conducting experiments?

The mystery of Turing's death has burnished his reputation; those who die young are frozen in time before wrinkles and mental decay can do their dread work. But there was something special about the man, a very English combination of innocence, gaiety and wisdom lightly-borne.

His education, though haphazard and badly matched to his talents, left him with an imaginative freedom that might have been suppressed in a more conventionally-coached boy. At King's College Cambridge he found the environment where his genius could find expression.

Horizon made a brave and largely successful effort to convey the essence of Turing's life. Last November, the first competition to measure the intelligence of a computer program — based on a test devised by Turing — was held in Boston. He over-optimistically predicted that by the end of the century a computer would successfully counterfeited the behaviour of a human being.

Nobody ever seems likely to set out to mimic the strange combination of qualities that made Turing so remarkable. Human genius comes in many forms, few as enigmatic as the young mathematician who first conceived the idea of a stored-program computer. There are no memorials to Turing; they are all about us.

NIGEL HAWKES

● Science and Technology, page 6

## ARTS BRIEF

### Surprise in store

AS THIS year's Towards the Millennium gets under way, plans for next year are emerging. Since 1993 will be year three of the decade-long festival, the spotlight will be on the 1920s, with once again the London Sinfonietta, the CSO and Simon Rattle making the music. Stravinsky, Bartók, Geršwin and Varèse are inevitable choices, but there are also nice surprises, such as the pairing of late Ravel (*L'enfant et les sortilèges* with Elise Ross) and schoolboy Britten (*Four French Songs*, with Amanda Rocroft). Once again the festival will be held, next spring, in Birmingham, Cardiff and London.

### Much as you like

TWO years ago everybody seemed to be performing *King Lear*. This summer the chic Shakespeare play is *As You Like It*. Not only is it opening at Stratford-on-Avon on April 22, with Samantha Bond as Rosalind, there is a revival with Jemma Redgrave at Greenwich on May 4, and now another at the Open Air, Regent's Park, on June 16, with a still unannounced actress in the lead.

### Last chance...

IT TOOK 80 years for Franz Schreker's opera *Der ferne Klang* to reach this country, and the scale of the piece, with dozens of roles and a lavish orchestra, places it in altogether more opulent times than these. The dreamy music, wandering between Strauss and Puccini, is passionately conveyed under Paul Daniel in Opera North's production. Final performance: Saturday at Manchester's Palace Theatre (061-236 9922).

## JAZZ RECORDS

### Before they could croon

Jazz, or funk, or pop? The bubbling over the guitarist Ronny Jordan has come to a head in the past month thanks to an extremely astute publicity campaign by his record company. These are the same people, remember, who brought us the multi-media phenomenon called Courtney Pine.

A young north Londoner who saw the light when he stumbled across a Wes Montgomery album, Jordan is being talked about

Ronny Jordan: *The Antidote* (Island CIO9988)  
Nat King Cole: *The Best of the Nat King Cole Trio* (Capitol CDP7-98288)  
Harry Connick Jr.: *Harry Connick Jr.* (Columbia 480490)

everywhere, or so it seems. After a Top 40 hit with a version of Miles Davis's "So What", he is currently on the road as support act with Barry White.

After all the hullabaloo, *The*



Nat King Cole: first made his name as a piano player

*Antidote* turns out to be an energetic and unpretentious debut, aimed much more at the dance audience than the committed jazz.

"So What" makes another appearance allied with fluid guitar work and some unexceptional excursions into rap. Overall, the drum programmers appear to have had the upper hand in the studio, leaving little room in which the musicians can manoeuvre.

Beware the small print at the bottom of the sleeve of the new Nat King Cole compilation: the emphasis is on "instrumental classics" rather than his vocal prowess. That is reasonable enough, since Cole first made his name as a piano player. The hit songs came somewhat later.

As a soloist, he was among the most influential players in the transitional period between swing and bebop. His use of the piano-guitar-bass format (which, according to legend, came about by accident after a drummer failed to show up for an engagement) also inspired many imitators. The approach is faithfully documented on the Capitol set, with a dash of Latin percussion added on the later tracks.

The career of Harry Connick Jr. seems to be following a similar trajectory to Cole's, a point which is highlighted by the re-issue of the 1987 debut album, a non-vocal collection which was previously available on import only.

Considering he was still in his teens at the time, these are exceptionally sophisticated and varied performances. Note the mature interpretation of a difficult Monk tune, "Mean You". Recommended for those who are still sceptical of Connick the crooner.

CLIVE DAVIS

## LONDON CONCERTS

### Good company

EACH year at Lockenhaus, in the Burgenland area of Austria, Gidon Kremer gathers friends around him to play chamber music. These various groups, which from this year go under the rather ugly name of Kremerata Musica, are distinguished by a unique guiding spirit. Kremer's art is an open-minded, co-operative one. He needs the stimulus of interplay with others, and he is far too intelligent to be satisfied merely with the challenges of the standard handful of concertos which alone could provide him with a handsome living.

So in this concert at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, with a company consisting of himself, clarinetist Sabine Meyer, cellist Clemens Hagen and pianist Oleg Maisenberg, he began with Olivier Messiaen's affirmation of faith from the prison camp, *The Quartet for the End of Time*.

Often the performance touched the sublime though there were times — particularly in the earlier ensemble movements — when the marriage of talents did not work quite perfectly.

Indeed, the big solos came off best. Meyer's control of dynamic and timbre in "Abyss of the Birds" was exemplary, as were Hagen's bow control, singing tone and breathtaking long diminuendo in "Praise to the eternity of Jesus". But Kremer himself gave the "Praise to the immortality of Jesus" with a spiritual intensity that elevated the reading to another plane.

With Hagen, violinist Annette Bilk and viola player Catherine Metz, Kremer then went on to tackle Schubert's final string quartet, Op 161 in G. Perhaps a quartet who had lived longer together would have taken a less

rough, more spacious approach to its faster movements, and the blend of instruments would also have been more satisfying — Kremer is not one to cocoon his bright tone in cotton wool, even in circumstances such as these which would seem to require it — but the reading displayed admirable impetus and much instinctive wisdom.

The following evening at the Festival Hall witnessed another episode in the revitalisation of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra under the guidance of its American principal conductor, Andrew Litton.

It is an excellent policy for any orchestra to give its principal players the chance to shine, and the BSO's experienced flautist, Karen Jones, played Bernstein's touching *Hatil*, an elegy to a young flute player killed in the Arab-Israeli conflict, with great beauty and sensitivity, just avoiding, as the piece itself just avoids, falling into sentimentality.

After that, André Watts's strongly voiced version of Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto seemed rather on the massive side. But the sense of narrative was compelling, the colours vivid if sometimes hard, and no gesture was made unthinkingly.

Litton and the Bournemouth players really came into their own, however, in a wonderful realisation of Elgar's First Symphony. The quality of the orchestra's string playing was extremely pleasing, while Litton's deep knowledge of and affection for this score brought out many fresh intricacies of detail. Above all, though, this was a performance of substance and concentrated strength.

STEPHEN PETTITT

## RADIO

### Coming into its own on an Antipodean cricket pitch

6am last Thursday, when Captain Gooch was turning a corner of a foreign cricket field into something forever (or at least for the time being) England.

This, of course, is where radio comes into its own. If you did happen to be watching on Sky Sports, you'd have been told that the official World Cup radio station was Capital Gold, which is fine if you happen to live in the London area and don't mind getting your cricket scores from Tony Blackburn, with summaries from David Hamilton.

However, if you have the good fortune to live outside London and simply wanted

the latest state of play, you had only to turn to the *Today* programme on Radio 4, where Brian Redhead delivered the news with the kind of glee he normally reserves for ten-mile tailbacks on the M61.

Purists, of course, know exactly what to do — they turn to Radio 3. But what did we get on Radio 3 last Thursday morning? We got classical music, by all that's holy! Bizet, Schubert, some fellow called Francaix — it was 8.30 in the morning before they even played something English, although even Thomas Tallis's *Lamentations of Jeremiah* had nothing on the lamentations of Allan Border.

and where were we to hear those?

Mercifully, a perfectly-modulated Radio 3 announcer was on hand to remind die-hards that, in a break with tradition equalled only by the result of the match itself, ball-by-ball World Cup commentary was now to be heard on the new-fangled Radio 5, half a twiddle along the dial on medium wave. And there it was, as loud and clear as a Phil Tufnell low appeal.

And you, at what was lunch in Sydney, we got neither a little light music nor Brian Johnston chewing the cud with the captain of the 1925

Indian tourists, but Danny Baker gibbering in what can only have been code, promising to shut up when the cricket was due to start.

And when it did, the overs were punctuated not only by Australian summarisers trying to put the hex on England's batsmen by saying how well they were playing, but also by Radio 5 announcers promising teachers that *Listening and Reading, Wiggle Park and The Song Tree* would be on after the cricket, and they should consult their classroom notes for further details.

Oh well, we'll all get used to this, now that the BBC has finally severed the Gordian

knot and decided that ball-by-ball cricket coverage will, after all, be heard on the channel that was specifically set up to accommodate it.

And there is more to be said for Radio 5 than the fact that it spurs you the sight of cricketers playing in their pyjamas. Speaking on behalf of my own car radio, the signal is very much stronger than it is on Radio 3 — strong enough even to let me listen while driving through the concrete canyons of the City. And what a pleasure it was to listen to the Australian announcers, their tongues chewed raw, saying how much England deserved to win and how lovely it was working with Christopher Martin-Jenkins again. Indeed his was the only downbeat voice to be heard, but then he was probably simply trying to return the courtesies by not howling in their faces like a demented dingo.

PATRICK STODART

## Royal Academy of Arts until 5 April 1992



Help Family with St Elizabeth and the Infant St John the Baptist (detail) c.1460-65  
The Kneading of Dough, c.1460-65  
ANDREA MANTEGNA  
PAINTER, DRAUGHTSMAN & PRINTMAKER  
OF THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE  
Presented by Olivetti  
"a triumph" THE OBSERVER "outstanding" INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY



# Playing for time in childhood

A new study of 500 schoolchildren claims that after the age of eight boys and girls rarely come out to play with toys any more, preferring to sit in front of a computer or TV screen. When they do play, they are in a violent mood. Alexandra King reports

Do you know what your children are playing — and should you care? No and yes, according to a new study of 500 children between the ages of seven to 14.

The researchers went into the playground to observe the games children play, as well as questioning them about their play and television viewing habits at home. The results of two years of interviews and observation by Elizabeth Stutz, the founder of the Norwich-based national charity Play For Life, may confirm some parents' fears that the end of childhood — as we like to think we knew it — is nigh.

"Soon after the age of eight, play with toys stops," Mrs Stutz found, "and 65 per cent of the children take up computer games and electronic entertainments — which includes watching soap operas on television." If this survey is to be believed, it would appear that by the age of ten it is common for children to own the complete range of electronic equipment, and from the age of 11 60 per cent may spend much of their spare time at amusement arcades, shops and discos.

Seventy-three per cent of the sample, taken from state schools in the Norwich area, played in amusement arcades, 82 per cent watched videos and 80 per cent chose programmes "based on horror, violence and crime". Seventy-two per cent of the boys enjoyed being involved in a fight or watching others fight — and 56 per cent said they wanted a real gun when they were grown up, (compared to 13 per cent of girls).

The survey was carried out by a Quaker-backed organisation dedicated to campaigning for "life affirming" toys and games, so some might say it set out simply to confirm pre-existing prejudices. But Mrs Stutz, a retired educationalist who used to teach teenagers in inner city schools, says her recorded interviews and photographs let the children speak for themselves without her often emotive intervention.

The children (and in some cases their parents) answered simple questions such as "Where do you spend your spare time? Which of the following outdoor games do you do? What are your hobbies?" plus the occasional "loaded" question such as "Did you enjoy 'shooting' games? Would you like to have a real gun when you are older?"

Mrs Stutz, who started Play For Life nine years ago shortly after she became a grandmother, is

passionate about her findings, which are the result of two years of work in often awkward circumstances. ("Watching or photographing children immediately arouses suspicion, and a photographer unwittingly and unwillingly finds her or himself in the role of a voyeur," she notes — a fact which, in itself, she finds a sad sign of the times.)

Dolls were the most popular plaything for girls — particularly fashion dolls such as Barbie and My Little Pony. The boys' favourites were action figures ("with bulging muscles, striking combat poses", Mrs Stutz editorialises) and Lego

**'The girls seemed well integrated with their friends, whereas with the boys there did not seem to be any genuine camaraderie'**

— which, she claims, "is often used for making guns, forts and other objects needed for war games", although it would be exceedingly difficult to make a Lego gun.

But while the answers to her questions for the most part merely confirmed Mrs Stutz's suspicions that today's children are too much under the influence of violent video games and television — she was simply not sure how much equals too much — her observations of the children at play brought some surprises.

"I discovered that when children were in the playground, away from the lure of these electronic devices, they were playing the sort of games which children have played since the beginning of time," she says — tag and piggyback, leapfrog and skipping games, and "puppy-like rough and tumble which is good-natured and not to be classified as a form of violence".

She also discovered that boys and girls divided sharply in the types of playground games they played, with girls socialising and

co-operating while boys were competitive and hostile. The girls formed cosy little circles or knots, facing into the centre — often for singing, rhyming and hand-clapping games — while the boys dispersed and played ball and chasing games. Only occasionally did they mix, when she noticed girls teaching boys their games — but not the other way around.

"The girls seemed well integrated with their friends, and quite happy playing traditional games, whereas with the boys, although there was not necessarily animosity, there did not seem to be any genuine camaraderie or real friendship between them," she says. "And while some of their games might spring from the imagination, the boys' accounts indicate that in fact most of their imaginative games are based on TV serials or videos containing a substantial element of violence."

Mrs Stutz credits the girls' doll play with helping them to socialise at an early age, whereas the boys' games, she fears, teach them to regard others as enemies or rivals. "It may be of significance," she suggests, "that in the group aged eight and nine — the only group in which boys stated they had played with dolls, boy dolls — there was the lowest percentage taking karate classes, watching videos and playing in amusement arcades, and the highest percentage keeping pets."

"I didn't put a question on fear into the questionnaire, but I discovered from talking to the children that many had a great fear of some of the things they were watching — but were afraid of seeming scared," Mrs Stutz says.

One boy said he watched horror videos but admitted: "I like them, I think they're funny, but afterwards I have nightmares... I won't let my children watch them." Another talked cheerfully of a game which involved "killing all your friends to win the war".

But boys have been boys since time immemorial, and — as Dr Jacqueline Jukes, the author of a recently published report on children and aggression, notes — "a child will make guns out of sticks to play violent games if nothing else is available".

Is Mrs Stutz really suggesting that we should go back to the supposedly good old days when children played with rag dolls and sang "Ring a Ring o' Roses"? — originally, of course, a rather grim ritualistic chant to ward off the plague? "No," she says. "We can't go back. But children instinctively



Playgrounds for today: the study found that the boys were competitive and hostile, dispersing and playing ball and chasing games...



...while the girls formed cosy little circles or knots, facing into the centre, often for singing, rhyming and hand-clapping games

play things that are inherent in human nature, and it is up to parents and teachers to encourage the positive, creative and constructive elements of that nature.

There are, of course, many useful ways of using computers. The problem is that computers are very seductive, and children spend too long sedentary, simply staring at a screen using keys, when they should be experiencing social intercourse and relationships and developing emotional responses and craft skills and outdoor activities.

That world is becoming totally lost to them."

Her report offers suggestions for constructive play and for schemes which should benefit all children — even those who still enjoy the occasional violent video game. Play acting, puppetry, singing, skating, fishing, cycling, dancing, craftwork, nature trails, social clubs and adventure playgrounds are all advocated, and Mrs Stutz commends Norwich city council for its tree planting scheme involving schoolchildren

— and for involving them in researching play equipment.

While it is suddenly fashionable for adults to try to encourage "the child within them" (typified by Elizabeth Taylor, who recently held her sixtieth birthday party at Disneyland), children are losing their childhood, Mrs Stutz warns. "Play for Life hopes to start a centre for creative activities to encourage such play skills in children and adults," she says, "because people of all ages can play. It might take them away

from the screen and reintroduce peaceful activities into homes."

● Play For Life will be holding its AGM and a day of workshops on "Children and the world we live in" on Saturday March 21 at the American Church, 79 Tottenham Court Road, London W1. Admission is £12 to non-members, £8 for the first child and £5 for additional children. Further details — and copies of the report "What Are They Doing Now?" (£4.95 including postage) from Play For Life, 318 Ipswich Road, Norwich NR2 2LN (0603 505947).

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## Baby baby-minders

Can anyone tell exactly when a child is mature enough to be a babysitter?

Last week, a child of 12 was convicted of manslaughter. She had been hired to babysit an 18-month-old and his sister of four: when the little boy cried persistently, the child babysitter lost control, shaking and smothering him. The mother had employed her in the belief that he was 13 rather than 11 at the time.

But is 13 old enough? Childless people, unfamiliar with the muddled, makeshift, idiosyncratic underworld of babysitting, may well have raised an eyebrow. Is it normal for a child two years out of primary school to be entrusted with sole charge of a house in the evening, let alone of infants? Is it common, is it even legal?

The answer is yes. The Citizens Advice Bureau and the National Children's Bureau (NCB) confirm that, contrary to popular belief, it is perfectly legal not to have a babysitter at all. Any worried citizen who has ever lingered fretfully in a car-park watching a hot, imprisoned infant on someone else's back seat can tell you that. So can anyone who has vainly tried to interest the police in the unattended, howling pram in next door's garden.

"There is a common myth that you can't leave children alone under 13," Allison Forbes of the NCB says. "But it is untrue. The whole issue is very vague: in the public setting there are endless rules, but nothing to regulate who looks after them at home. Except commonsense and the parents' judgment about the maturity of an individual child." I could find no baby book which addresses the question of how old a teenage babysitter ought to be: indeed several positively recommend teenagers, even for young babies. The mother of the victim in last week's case was a nursery nurse: to her 13 seemed reasonable.

So it does for countless others. If you have an idea that this is some

desperate measure, the last resort of the pressured inner-city single parent, then think again. Plenty of middle-class women and their partners were willing (provided their real names were kept out of it) to admit that they use children of this age.

Like Jane, "I am not proud of it," she says. "But Laura down the road is 13 this spring, very mature for her age, and I do leave her with the baby. She only charges £1.50 an hour." "I'd really rather have an older woman," says another. "A cosy old body. Only in practice, it's so embarrassing paying them."

And they're nosy, and they get cross if you're home a bit late. "Agencies are fiendishly expensive," says another, "and older teenagers have such incredible social lives you can't get them on a Saturday. Or if you do, they bring loutish boyfriends in. With a nice 13 or 14-year-old you feel you're in control."

The question is whether she — or he — is equally in control. Everyone knows that young children have violent reactions which quickly turn physical: they lash out when they are frustrated. As a child turns into an adult, it learns self-control: what psychologists call the "emergency emotions", the adrenalinised flight-or-fight reactions, are regulated by reason. There is a point when adolescents start counting up to ten before

flying off the handle: perhaps not until then should they be trusted alone with that most provocative of creatures, a crying baby. But the turning point is unpredictable and hard to spot.

"I had a marvellous babysitter, just turned 15," says Alison, a television producer. "Played with the baby and the toddler, changed a nappy quicker than I could, was full of helpful hints she had picked up on other baby-sitting jobs, and even came on holiday with us."

But one night I got home and found all three of them in tears like babies together, because Alice wouldn't settle and the baby kept crying, and this girl was sitting in the mess, saying, 'It's not fair. They're horrible to me'. She'd just opted out. She was even sucking her thumb.

"And I thought, I've felt like that some nights, but I'm 30 and I've got resources. Never until that minute had it occurred to me that this girl was too young to have those resources. I felt terrible."

No one I spoke to regarded legislation as desirable, or indeed enforceable. Ms Forbes also pointed out that in poor families the income earned by children forms an essential part of the family budget, and babysitting is one of the few jobs available. "This is a very difficult issue. Disadvantaged children need the money." And in truth, tragedies like the Newcastle one are rare.

So whether families go on using children to mind children will depend on individual judgment.

Emma has made hers. She has two girls, 13 and 15, who are frequently asked but rarely allowed to babysit for other families in the evening. "My daughters look older than they are. Girls do, these days. I think the eye make-up and the clothes make people ascribe maturity to them which they frankly haven't got."

"I'll let them babysit in the daytime for an hour or so, or at night if it's virtually next door to my house and I'm in. But no way would I allow them to be streets away from help, in the dark, with tired little kids. Suppose the fuse blew? Or the phone got cut off? Or someone choked? Or a man came to the door claiming to be the police?"

Her husband agrees. "I never met a child under 16 who was much good at first aid, or changing nappies, or knowing a real identity card from a fake one. And yet, still these women keep offering them peanuts to look after infants who can't yet walk or talk. Is that fair?"

This struck a chord: at 14 I stayed with a friend and went on one of her babysitting missions. I remember the evening as distinctly scary: the harsh dependent breathing of the small children, the fear of doing something wrong, the sound of revellers leaving the pub down the road, the anxious glances at the clock when the parents were late back, and finally the uncomfortable pre-breathalyser experience of being driven home by a distinctly drunken Daddy who kept changing gears with my friend's knee. On the whole, we reflected, we would rather stick to restocking freezers in the local ice-cream shop. And it paid more.

LIBBY PURVES

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## Things made with love and loo rolls

How to cope with, and respond to, kiddie craft

your future places of honour? "I can't bear to think of the children's efforts going home and straight into the bin. Here we display every child's work, not just the 'best'," Deborah Berkin, the head of the Grove Independent School in Milton Keynes, says. "And I don't believe parents should expect evidence of what their child has done every day. They could have been involved in creative play where there is no end product."

Parents of experience develop imaginative alternatives. One

**How much do you want a pizza pack letter-rack, or corrugated pin tidy?**

couple has covered a kitchen wall with cork tiles and limited the domestic gallery to that space. Others provide a notice board for every child, allowing each to update their own display. "Siting the exhibition over a radiator is a good plan, as it speeds the drying out process. But be warned. Many's the parent who, on a quiet evening, has been mystified by strange patterings that sound like indoor hail, and turn out to be pieces of painted lentil dropping off the latest pulse-and-pasta collage. To try to analyse your children's

artwork (though psychologists have tried) is vain. Obviously, it will reflect their preoccupations, but the use of colour may be misleading. "Children like dark colours, especially black, because they show up well. It doesn't mean your child is disturbed," Ms Porter explains.

I can remember being anxious because my daughter's pictorial efforts were always squashed into the bottom of the page. Was she repressed or unhappy? Then I saw her at work in the nursery. She was just much shorter than the easel, and could only reach up to the lower edge of the paper.

The problem of storage and display takes on a third dimension when children start on "junk modelling". This is the supreme example of recycling.

You are required to save all household packaging: cornflake packets, tissue boxes, tins and toothpaste tops. With some relief, you send the consumer detritus to school. In no time at all, it will return as a shirt-box robot, kitchen-roll telescope or yoghurt-carton space station.

Some artefacts will be merely sculptural, others feign functionality. You may not have wanted your old frozen dinner container, but how much do you want a pizza pack letter-rack, or corrugated drawing-pin tidy? (In any case, all your pins are holding up the interesting life calendar.)

I know of no answer. If, in *Blue Peter* phraseology, you have one or more you "made earlier" (children, that is), you must stand at the gates and gratefully accept a lot of wet things made with love and loo rolls. And here comes another one I made earlier...

DAVINA LLOYD

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السلامة



# Who is the healthiest of them all?

On Super Tuesday in the American presidential race, Victoria McKee reports on the importance of fitness to rulers

**M**arital fidelity, sexual harassment and the state of the economy aside, the biggest issue in the forthcoming American election will be health. The health of the candidates, that is. So says Professor Herbert Abrams, an authority on the health of world leaders and its impact on what he calls "crisis decision-making in the nuclear age".

Paul Tsongas, a Democratic contender, has made fitness part of his campaign, being photographed in his swimming trunks to prove that despite treatment for lymphoma nine years ago he is fit to govern. But it is the health of jogging George Bush, and the role of his vice-president, Dan Quayle, if Mr Bush should be stricken, that concerns Professor Abrams.

The professor has just had a book published in the United States about the circumstances surrounding the assassination attempt on Ronald Reagan a decade ago, and the relevance of the shooting to the current campaign.

In the book, *The President Has Been Shot* (WW Norton), Professor Abrams demonstrates how a drugged-up president who lost nearly half the blood in his body still technically had his finger on the nuclear button and argues for the proper use of the 25th Amendment to the Constitution. According to the never-invoked amendment, the vice-president should be declared "acting president" if a president is temporarily incapacitated.

After President Reagan was shot on 30 March, 1981, Alexander Haig, the secretary of state, claimed: "I am control here in the White House pending return of the vice-president." But Professor Abrams says the succession order should have run "from the president to vice-president, speaker of

the house, president pro tempore of the Senate and only then to the secretary of state and other members of the cabinet".

Professor Abrams has enjoyed unprecedented access to the medical records and personal physicians of George Bush and to the records of previous American presidents for a massive study he is compiling on the health of world leaders and its impact on decision-making. He believes that the present incumbent is in danger of crippling his party's prospects because of lack of public confidence in his health after his hospitalisation for heart fibrillations and his startling collapse in Japan.

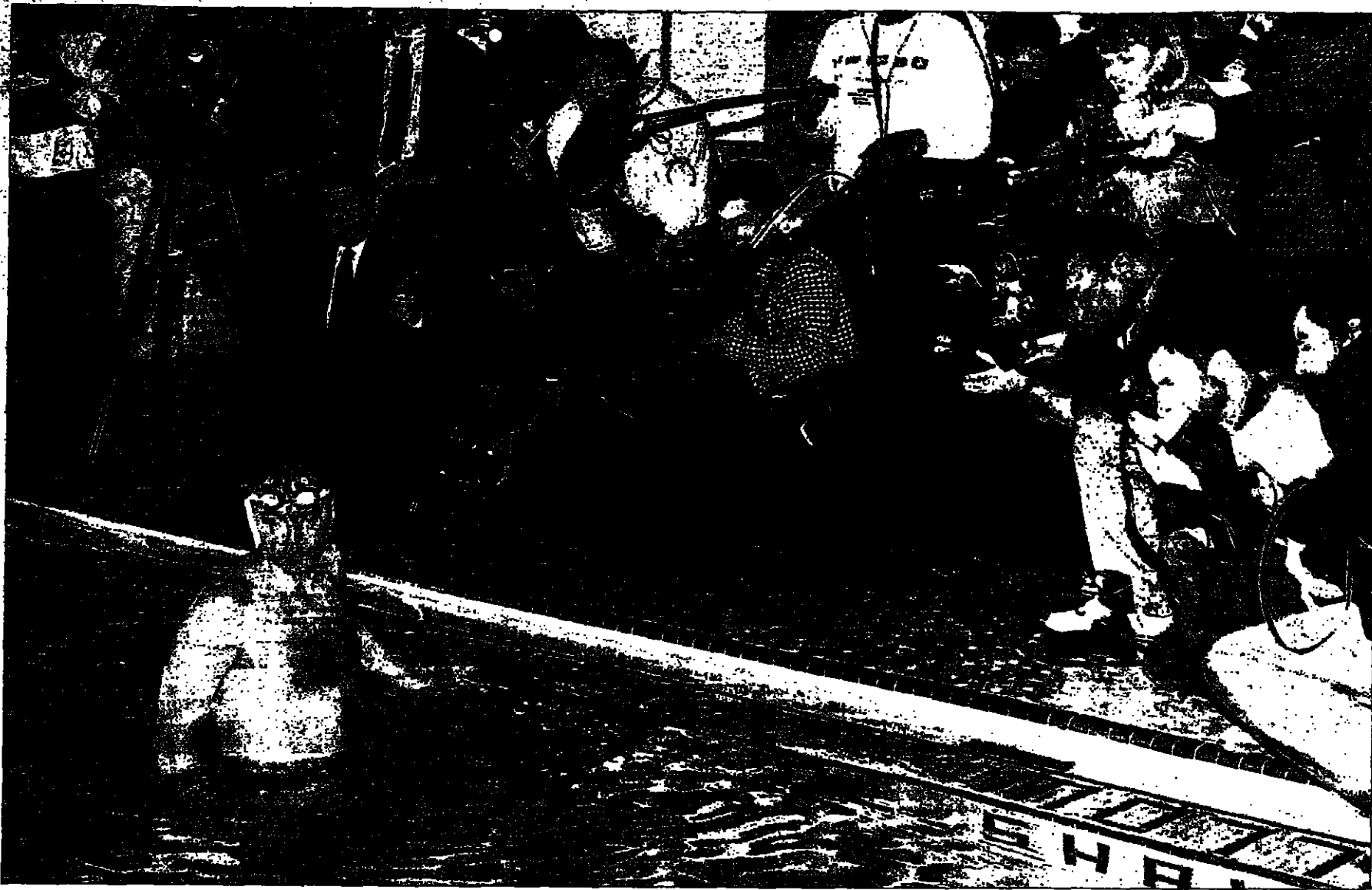
**'Any serious change in metabolism can affect the personality'**  
HERBERT ABRAMS

"This is because the American public has no faith in Dan Quayle, and there is a sudden realisation that who the vice-president is really matters," says Professor Abrams, who holds dual appointments at the Stanford University School of Medicine and Stanford Center for International Security and Arms Control.

"I've been on talk-shows and radio phone-ins recently and I keep getting questions about what would happen if George Bush had a heart attack. Would they evoke the 25th Amendment? Would Dan Quayle become acting president?"

"If the president jettisons Quayle, people may see it as his understanding of the nation's concern, but they might see it as confirmation that he is worried about his health — and the right wing of the Republican Party would not be happy. If he keeps Quayle, the Quayle Factor — and the president's health — will certainly be a big issue."

Mr Quayle came within a heartbeat of being made acting president, Professor Abrams believes, when President Bush was about to be taken in for defibrillatory shock



Focus on fitness: Paul Tsongas, a Democratic contender for the presidency, may sink or swim according to how healthy an image he can project to the public

treatment since the drugs he had been prescribed did not seem to be working. However the drugs worked in time to render aesthetic unnecessary and the opportunity to test the 25th Amendment had passed.

More recently, Professor Abrams suggests that the complete destruction of President Bush's hyperactive thyroid which was causing the condition and his thyroid replacement therapy may have affected his "disorganised approach" to the threat of Pat Buchanan in the current campaign. "Any serious change in

metabolism can affect the personality," Professor Abrams says. But then Professor Abrams believes that John F. Kennedy's decision-making abilities were marred by steroids he was taking, and that neither Winston Churchill nor Franklin Roosevelt was in good enough health to govern through times of crisis.

He can tell you, in an instant, how many American presidents (eight) and Soviet general secretaries (four) have had heart conditions while in office, and how many had cerebral haemorrhages while in office (three Americans

and two Soviets). His book also lists the presidents this century who had high blood pressure and gastro-intestinal diseases — and who underwent surgery without relinquishing leadership.

The 25th Amendment was prompted by Eisenhower's surgery for an intestinal obstruction and stroke in 1957, but did not become law until 1967. In Britain, according to a Downing Street spokesman, the position is that the prime minister is prime minister whether in Downing Street or in

hospital. If a prime minister were to drop dead, the cabinet would meet under the chairmanship of its most senior member, or the Lord Chancellor, to decide who would lead country and party.

Professor Abrams finds this frightening. Where split-second decisions may suddenly be required, he believes that nothing should be left to chance — and that the public has the right to expect its leaders to be on top form, or to have a viable deputy if they are not. The recent American obsession with making public the "medical" of presidents and presidential

candidates is not just a manifestation of the nation's hypochondria, he feels, but a development which other countries would be wise to follow. He would like to see tests for "fitness" to govern extended to those running departments.

"And if Paul Tsongas emerges as a serious Democratic contender then the health issue will be even bigger," Professor Abrams says. "Although he appears to be cured, if he becomes the nominee the health question — and proper use of the 25th Amendment — will become even more critical."

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## It's all in the mind

ADRIAN BROOKS



Brain food for brainy people: members and guests at a Mensa dinner at the National Liberal Club in Whitehall with salmon starters

**I**n a timely move away from the physical obsession of the 1980s, the head, it seems, is suddenly the thing about which to form a society. There are at least three separate groups calling themselves "brain clubs" — all devoted, in one way or another, to the space between your ears.

First, there is a "new age environment" club in London. Then there is the Brain Club for a group of neurosurgeons (presumably for technical chit-chat); and lastly, there is The Brain Club, "a charitable organisation dedicated to research and the dissemination of knowledge about cognition". Research undertaken by this last club includes "Do Brains Love to Cuddle?", and "Who is the smartest person in the United States?". Membership operates "on a global scale" and is open for anyone who is not a hippy or a neurosurgeon. "We apply to anyone who has a brain, and who wants to know how to use it better," says John Needham, the head of the London "club".

So egalitarian is The Brain Club, that a list of contenders for its annual Brain of the Year award includes, alongside Ted Turner and Madonna, Magic Johnson, the American basketball star, and the Prince of Wales.

The club's leader, Tony Buzan, is convinced that braininess is not reserved for a mere sliver of society. "In between your ears is a super-bio computer," he says.

"You can do all sorts of magic things with it — you just need to know how to use it." And so his club is devoted to improving the capability of the mind, for anyone

**If you want to get ahead do you really need to join a "brain club"?**

who cares to turn up. The London club had its monthly meeting in a draughty office in Borough, south London. About 20 earnest-looking people appeared, clutching felt-tip pens and producing complex drawings from out of files. "These show different techniques for memorising information," said Jim Webster, a police constable who says he would never have passed his exams had he not learned memory techniques via The Brain Club. One woman was so impressed with the mental advice The Brain Club had given her, that she couldn't sleep after her first cell.

Meetings consist of lectures about the mind, and advice on "mental gymnastics". To help us with our gymnastics, our lecturer Jane Mitchell gave a memory test: you lined up a row of coffee beans, pennies and tacks for a partner who had to fumble along the line with closed eyes, memorising the order. Then they had to try to correctly recite the components of the line.

This was memory marathon time. Lines composed of up to 14 objects were placed down the desks; a hush fell as minds were pitted against coffee beans. Mr Webster could manage only a line of 12 objects. "I didn't feel my beans too well," he said sadly. Ms Mitchell walked around. "Fill up on sensory modality," she instructed.

Of course, this concept, available for "anyone who has a brain",

is quite the opposite to that granddaddy of all brain clubs, Mensa. Mensa, an "intelligence network" founded in 1946, is a society the membership of which is restricted to those whose intelligence quotient is 148 or higher. This is apparently achieved by 2 per cent of the population; consequently, Mensansians believe they are in a sort of mental top table and don't waste their time with brain improvement.

**M**ensa, with its celebrity members, black tie dinners and weird newspaper adverts, certainly has the clout to seriously unnervify its competitors in the cranium club scene. "Mensa is like saying we're all clever anyway, let's just get together," said one member of The Brain Club. "Here, we're all trying to develop mentally. We're not all very clever."

Mensa members do not bother with coffee beans in Borough offices; no fear. Their idea of a monthly cell is to have a dinner every four weeks at the National Liberal Club in Whitehall.

Guests at a recent dinner included a Conservative MP, the arts impresario Richard Demarco (both invited by members), and Sir Clive Sinclair, inventor of the C5 and now the Zike, who has been in Mensa since he was 17. As we embarked on our salmon starters (great brain food), Victor Serebriakoff, the international president of Mensa and chairman

of the dinner, read out the list of topics we were to discuss.

Discussing something when you know you are brainy is not easy. At the beginning of the meal, topics such as "Is History Dead?" or "Whither the One Nation State?" were picked up rather haltingly by those assembled, anxious perhaps not to make an unbrainy statement in front of Mr Serebriakoff.

But dinner is dinner, and gradually, the conversation turned to spicier subjects, such as the uncanny sexual appeal of anyone leading the Liberals. Mr Serebriakoff vainly tried to keep control. "Order! Let's have one person speaking!" he shouted. "Why?" the table chorused, before returning to the nitty-gritty.

For those eager to know what the nitty-gritty is for the top 2 per cent, let me say it's on about the same level as a radio phone-in. "Opera is just bloody Italians prancing about in tights," said the Conservative MP. "I should know. I've been on the Fringe." "Heaven preserve us from whingers," said a tax inspector, punching the MP with false camaraderie. "Let's discuss Page 3 of *The Sun*." The whole table groaned. "She does this every time. Do shut up!" said my neighbour.

"Is Mensa about improving your mind?" Sir Clive said. "Hell no! It's about having a good social life!" So, why the funny tests? Why the 2 per cent? As far as Mr Buzan and his brain club is concerned: "The news is good. It's no matter if you fail your Mensa test. You still have a brain."

ROSIE MILLARD

## Western cash, Russian thrash

**The music business is starting to find that western rock and pop is a big hit in the east**

is a rootsy kind of music requiring skill but no virtuosity. Stephen Wells, a rock journalist who has recently judged the Bulgarian National Rock Competition, says, "The best explanation I have heard for thrash metal doing so well is that it is a music which alienates your parents. That is not to say this music is no good. It is unprofessional, but some of the bands are excellent."

The best such group, according to Mr Wells, is Bulgarian and called Aria. The band was formed by former students of modern music and jazz at Sofia University who exchanged the cello and the flute for the electric guitar at the earliest opportunity.

In Mr Wells's view, many of these bands are already being exploited by western, particularly German, record companies. They

are often offered poorer record deals than western musicians would expect. For the majority this does not matter. The only way to gain a recording contract in the past was to audition before state officials known as "Bald Uncles" — old poets and composers who would vet the music.

"It's going to change into a situation where a bunch of western dummies are making the decisions rather than a bunch of Stalinist bureaucrats," Mr Wells says. "And obviously the whole young lifestyle follows in advertising and TV."

Back in his Parisian office, such cynicism bounces off M de Caunes. He says simply that most east Europeans respect and emulate a western youth culture, top ten and all, because it is the best.

"England is still turning out some greats," M de Caunes says. "Even so some French singers are equally good." He cites Edienne Daho. Having gone through a Marc Almond image, Daho now looked distinctly like Dave Gahan, the singer with Depeche Mode. A group with a French name perhaps, but whose roots will for ever remain in Basildon.

ALISON ROBERTS



Antoine de Caunes, TV presenter: brought up on a diet of pop



# Dredging up ocean secrets

Water covers three-quarters of the world, yet we know relatively little about the oceans. Nick Nuttall reports

One of Britain's leading marine scientists is urging naval architects, technologists and computer specialists to support the creation of new machines needed to solve the riddles of seas. Three-quarters of the world is covered by water, believed to be crucial in ordering the earth's climate, yet mankind's scientific knowledge of these regions is almost as primitive as in the days of the ancient mariners.

"We need as big an effort in oceanology as we have with the weather," says John Woods, director of marine and atmospheric sciences at the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) in Swindon.

Dr Woods will urge delegates at the Oceanology International 92 conference, which opens in Brighton today, to commit their skills to a plan by the Oceanographic Commission to set up a Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS).

Dr Woods, Britain's chief delegate to the inter-governmental commission, believes the world's nations need to spend \$2 billion a year on monitoring oceans.

The main difficulty facing marine scientists grappling with the role of the seas in climate change is the gathering of sufficient and regular data, such as is used in meteorology.

Satellites, described by Dr Woods as robots in the sky, are making it possible to collect huge quantities of weather information on clouds, moisture, gases, ozone and pollution.

From these satellites, meteorologists are able to gauge weather patterns from computer models, which give longer and more accurate forecasts and aid predictions on the impact of pollution on global warming.

In contrast, he says, marine scientists still rely on measurements made by men in ships, in some cases taken 122 years ago.

An international study, the World Ocean Circulation Experiment, was launched last

year and aims to increase man's knowledge of the physics of the oceans fivefold.

Nevertheless, the exercise still involves men and ships, will take most of the decade to complete and will only produce a "snapshot" of the oceans' workings. Although satellites such as the European Space Agency's ERS-1 are providing invaluable data on waves, currents and sea temperatures, they can peer only into the first few millimetres of the sea's surface.

Such an experiment can also be very expensive. Using a survey ship in the Atlantic on a project can cost as much as £500,000.

"What we need for the Global Ocean Observing Sys-

**'We need as much of an effort with oceanology as we have with the weather'**

tem are machines able to monitor and observe every layer of the oceans in the way that satellites do in the air. We need to make the big step from the tedious techniques currently at our disposal to ones where data is collected automatically," Dr Woods says.

Several technologies are being developed which might, given sufficient support, deliver the automated equipment needed to make the GOOS work.

At the Natural Environment Research Council's Deacon Laboratory in Wormley, Surrey, researchers are three years into developing two underwater vehicles that could be central to the GOOS.

One is the Deep Ocean Geophysical Instrumented Explorer (Doggie), a device that would carry out surveys of sea beds.

The other, more important for improving the accuracy of climate models, is Deep Ocean Long Path Hydrographic Instrument. Dolphin, as it is called, is designed to zigzag across an ocean basin at about 6mph, gathering data on temperature, salinity, pollution, water chemistry, and possibly radiation and organisms at the very deepest parts of the seas.

Dr Peter Collar, project leader at the laboratory, says Dolphin is being designed to surface every 30 kilometres, in order to relay data via satellites to base and possibly to be redirected for a new mission.

Satellites, called global positioning satellites or GPS, will also pinpoint Dolphin's position so researchers know its exact location.

The development of Dolphin is presenting Dr Collar and his team with enormous technical challenges.

"In trying to develop extremely reliable software, we are facing the same fly-by-wire problems that Airbus has," says Dr Collar.

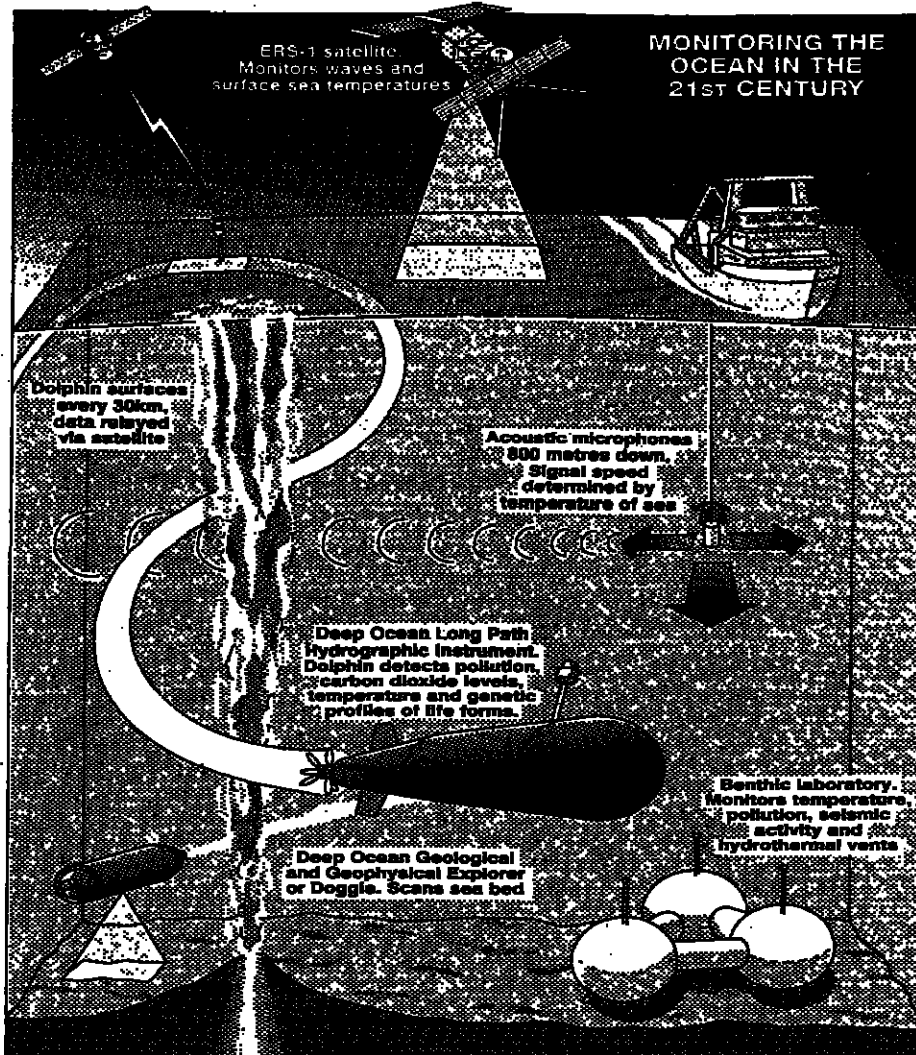
Dolphin's hull, propulsion unit and instruments need not only to be resistant to salt water but strong enough to survive the enormous pressure at great depths underwater.

As the craft might have to be capable of travelling up to 4,000 miles without being recharged, a breakthrough in either battery or fuel cell technology may be needed.

The team, which hopes to have a prototype in the water by 1996, is working with materials experts at the Defence Research Agency in Durnferme, Fife, on Dolphin's hull design and with Moog Controls on the craft's brushless motor.

Dr Woods believes about 200 Dolphins or Dolphin-like craft may be needed for the observing system, which will be set up in about 10 to 15 years' time.

French government-funded scientists are suggesting a network of Benthic laboratories, automated monitoring stations that would sit undisturbed on important parts of



the ocean floor for years, as part of the observing system.

The proposal, by researchers at the Paris IFREMER institute, initially calls for a station that would rely on a support vessel.

Such a ship, the design of which is being studied by Houlder Offshore of London on behalf of the institute, would not only deploy the laboratories but would return once a year or more to collect data and recharge the station's batteries.

Jacques Binot, a naval architect at the institute, says they would like to develop undersea laboratories that could survive independently of a support vessel.

This, however, would also necessitate a breakthrough in fuel cell or some other technology, and may require communications developments.

Transmitting data from deep in the ocean is currently

impossible by traditional radio or by optical means. Acoustical transmissions, although possible from 4,000 metres below, still have their drawbacks.

Mr Binot says the institute hopes to deploy up to 20 Benthic laboratories, mainly in deep sea areas associated with seismic activity and geothermal vents.

"These vents probably hold clues about the evolution of the climate but we have no idea of their life cycle. So the only way for monitoring is to have something permanently on the spot," says Mr Binot.

One device, which promises to offer invaluable information, is already being tested. Scientists at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in La Jolla, California, have been firing sound waves from microphones lowered from a ship off Heard Island, between Australia

and Antarctica. The experiment is aimed at establishing whether the sound waves, which can be picked up by ships dotted in the Pacific, Indian and Atlantic oceans, are useful for detecting ocean temperatures down to 320 metres. The warmer the temperatures the faster the speed of the sound waves, which remain trapped in the upper reaches of the ocean.

Dr Woods says German researchers are studying the use of lasers on aircraft to analyse upper layers of seas.

Despite these efforts, Dr Woods believes there is still much more work to be done on developing new equipment and instrumentation.

"This is a very exciting issue," he said. "The challenge I want to pose to delegates is: who is going to roll up their sleeves and work with us to see what new technologies can be found?"

## Missing protein

PEOPLE with Alzheimer's disease have lower levels of the protein choline in their brains, a team at Massachusetts Institute of Technology has discovered. The protein forms part of the cell membranes, and is also involved in the transmission of cell messages. Dr Richard Wurtman and his team report in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* that the choline shortage appears to be unique to Alzheimer's patients and the discovery may help with drug development.

## Moscow jobs

THE European Commission has backed the idea of creating an International Science and Technology Centre in Moscow to employ nuclear scientists made jobless by the break-up of the Soviet Union. The aim is to discourage the scientists from emigrating, possibly to would-be nuclear powers in the Third World. The EC and the United States will each contribute \$25 million (£14.5 million) to get the centre started. The EC Council of Ministers has to approve the project.

## Tuna trap

STOPPING dolphins being caught in tuna nets is virtually impossible, according to a study by the National Research Council in the United States. "No practical technology exists to eliminate dolphin deaths from tuna fishing," the council has reported to Congress. The nets kill thousands of dolphins every year but the scientists have failed to find a suitable alternative method of fishing.

## Back to life

PASCAL Barrier, a Frenchman who has been in a cave for more than 100 days, intends to emerge on Friday. His stay in the Cocalière cave near Avignon is not a world record, but Mr Barrier, aged 26, took no radio and has talked to nobody since he entered the cave on November 22. His only contact with the outside world has been an answering machine on which

he has left messages. Mr Barrier, who went into the cave because he wanted to be alone, has lost all notion of time, according to his support team at the surface, which is now recalibrating him to night and day to prepare him for the outside world.

## Pioneer calling

THE Pioneer spacecraft is still "phoning home" 20 years after being launched, though it is five billion miles from Earth and speeding off into deep space. Pioneer's radio messages take seven and a half hours to reach us, conveying data about solar wind, cosmic particles and ultraviolet light. Seven of the satellite's 12 instruments still work. Pioneer has left the solar system, and although it is travelling at 28,900mph, it will not encounter another heavenly body for 32,610 years, when it will pass a star called Ross 248.

## Going clean

THE Chrysler Corporation and Westinghouse Electric are collaborating on the design of an electric car. The impetus comes from a California law that says 2 per cent of the cars sold in the state, roughly 40,000 vehicles, must be emission-free by 1998. The proportion must rise to 10 per cent by 2003.

## Aids hope

THE drug AZT doubles the chances of an Aids victim surviving for at least two years, a study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* reports. Nearly 85 per cent of those treated with AZT would be alive after one year and 46 per cent at two years, against 46 per cent at one year and 21 per cent at two years among untreated patients, says Dr Stefano Vella, of the Istituto Superiore di Sanita in Rome.

## Weighty factor

LOSING weight and taking less salt can reduce blood pressure but reducing stress and taking dietary supplements such as fish oil cannot, a study co-ordinated by the US National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute has concluded. Weight loss was the single most effective treatment. Salt reduction was the next best.

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Polts apart: in 1964 Sir Alec Douglas-Home had to declare a proportion of the cost of a party political broadcast as personal expenditure. In 1992 posters spread the word

## Best voters cash can buy

Richard Gifford urges a change in election law, which restricts candidates' spending but allows parties to spend millions

Before the general election overwhelms us, it is worth pointing out the extraordinary fact that there are no limits on what the political parties can spend or the sums they can raise for their national campaigns.

Britain should now rationalise election law, first by bringing national party spending into account, and second by creating a standing commission to oversee elections. The publication of campaign finances would bring a breath of fresh air into a murky area. In the 1987 election, the Conservatives' central expenditure was £9 million, Labour's £4.2 million, and the Alliance's nearly £2 million.

This year again millions of pounds will be spent in advertising the party message, slick advertising agencies will project the expensive image of their client party, advertising hoardings will have been reserved and paid for months in advance of the election, and many years of research and fund-raising will suddenly burst into the media to seduce the electorate.

The counterpart to this law of the jungle is the parsimonious limit to what can be spent by an individual candidate, generally between £6,000 and £8,000 in an average constituency. Here the full rigours of a complex system of regulations comes into play. This means a candidate can only issue an election address, print a few posters and hire the odd hall for public meetings before his budget is exhausted.

This irrational dichotomy between

individual and party spending seems to be rooted in the 19th century, and is reflected in criminal offences of bribery and treating of individual voters. The distinction arose before mass communication and the widespread effects of advertising, psephologists and pollsters.

This system was reinforced in 1952 in a Central Criminal Court case when a limited company placed a newspaper advertisement attacking Labour party policies six days before the 1951 election. The court held that general political propaganda, as opposed to factors applying in a constituency, were not subject to the limits on an individual candidate's budget.

Again, in 1964 a Communist Party member made Sir Alec Douglas-Home bring within his individual election budget a proportion of the expense of the Conservative party election broadcast. The argument was that every candidate benefited from national party advertising and a proportion should be allocated to every candidate. The Scots' election court rejected this argument by making the artificial distinction between party advertising and that of a candidate.

Woe betide any candidate, too, who jumps the gun and starts his election expenses running. Any intending candidate who features him-

self too prominently in local party literature or actually says he is running for Parliament will trigger the start of his election expenses. Thereafter any expense incurred on his behalf will count towards his election expenses and may put him over the limit, with disastrous consequences.

This question of when a candidate starts his expenses and what is included can be the subject of intense legal debate after an election. When Adrian Slade was elected to the Greater London Council for Richmond, he was challenged with 15

permitted during a campaign is equally shrouded in uncertainty. A recent decision of the High Court, sitting in Tower Hamlets town hall and considering a challenge to the election of Liberal councillors in the borough, reversed the election court's decision that leaflets published by the Liberals, but presented to appear as if by Labour, were legitimate.

The technical requirements of election law had been complied with by adding the Liberal agent's name to the pamphlets in small print. The policies featured were all statements unlikely to appeal to the voters to whom the leaflets were delivered. The election court considered that, as every attributed statement was a correct version of Labour policy, there was nothing dishonest or unlawful about it.

The High Court considered, however, that they were a fraudulent device as Labour would not have chosen to highlight these items of policy at this stage in the campaign. They therefore amounted to a "corrupt practice" and the successful Liberal candidates were disqualified from election.

"Knocking copy" is fairly common in elections, and candidates are usually safe if they comply with the technical requirement that their publishing party is in print, however small. In the thick of an election

battle, candidates rely on these technical requirements.

What is needed is a supervisory body to oversee the conduct of elections. All that we have is an electoral registration officer whose function is confined to the conduct of the franchise and the filing of the candidates' returns, and a designated police officer, to whom a criminal offence can be reported.

A model is provided by the federal election commission in the United States, which is a standing regulatory body supervising all elections to the presidency, congress and senate. All campaign committees must file financial reports and state the amount of total campaign spending and the amount of individual contributions.

Unlike in UK election law, there is no limit on expenditure, except that if a presidential candidate receives "matching funds" from the federal election commission, he cannot spend more than \$46.1 million (1988 figures).

Publication of political donations in Britain would also stimulate debate on the benefits of state funding of elections. This topic has been ignored since 1975 when the Houghton Report recommended state financial assistance on the basis of 5p per vote cast.

Both Labour and Conservative governments have shelved the idea, no doubt content with their own fund-raising capabilities. It is extraordinary that their vast expenditure is not formally recorded anywhere.

The author is a partner with Sheridans, a London firm of solicitors

### The dichotomy between individual and party spending arose before mass communication

items of excess expenditure. All but two of these were rejected. Mr Slade was held to have overspent by 66p and his election return was consequently inaccurate. Although he was allowed to retain his seat, he was ordered to pay the legal costs incurred by the Labour party exceeding £50,000, many times the amount of his expense limit.

The whole question of what is

Sean Webster reports on the Names' legal battle at the insurance market

## Firms fight over Lloyd's

Solicitors in some of London's most reputable law firms are involved in a bitter wrangle over who is giving the best legal advice to Lloyd's Names who refuse to pay claims connected with the insurance market.

The dispute was sparked off when solicitors, Michael Freeman & Co, announced they were launching an action on behalf of Names and held two highly publicised seminars in January to gain support for the action.

The action is one of a number of complex disputes between the Names (the individuals who underwrite the insurance market) and the agents who handle their affairs. Last week Freeman issued more than 700 writs to members' agents: the aim is to seek injunctions to stop Lloyd's drawing on the deposits made by Names pending a

full inquiry into allegations of negligence at Lloyd's.

Other law firms representing Names are concerned that the writs and claims are not yet fully prepared and may unfairly raise Names' hopes. Dr David Tippley of D J Freeman, which has no connection with Michael Freeman & Co, says: "His case is legally unwise and his chances of winning are slim."

He says D J Freeman is constantly getting letters from the Names it advises, asking why the firm is not taking similar action. But he has no plans to do so, and has written to his clients disassociating

himself and the firm from such advice.

Richards Butler, another firm representing Names, has also advised clients against following suit. Mark Connolly, a partner, says: "The chances of succeeding are not good and Michael Freeman is offering his services to people who are desperate."

Michael Freeman himself, the senior partner in his firm, rebuts accusations that the case is not fully prepared, pointing out that it had to be assembled quickly. "Had we taken all the usual steps before launching such a com-

plicated action the Names' funds would have been lost, because we had only eight days to issue the writs before the Names' deposits were due to be drawn down by the Lloyd's members' agents."

John Fisher, of the legal firm, Withers, representing the Gooda Walker Action Group, which has been most badly affected by the LMX spiral of reinsurance, has written to the chairman of the group advising him to tell his members not to pursue the Michael Freeman course of action.

Mr Fisher denies that any criticism of the Michael Free-

man case derives from professional jealousy. "It is not at all a case of sour grapes. We give our clients the best possible advice." Withers, he points out, looked into the possibility of such action last October but counsel Gavin Lightman, QC, said the approach, based on technical objections to contracts signed by the Names, would not succeed.

Mr Fisher says: "Even assuming that the technical points constitute a breach of contract and a good arguable case, it is difficult to see that the scales of justice tip in the Names' favour when you consider the damage that will be

done to the Lloyd's reputation of always paying claims that are due." He believes a case based on the duty of care members' agents owe Names might succeed.

A further criticism being made of Michael Freeman & Co is that the firm has sailed close to the wind and may have breached Law Society rules on advertising by sending letters to Names inviting them to send cheques for £200 to join in injunction proceedings. But the firm has not been reported to the Law Society.

Tim Marshall, a partner of Michael Freeman says: "There has been criticism of what we are doing over the Names issue. Sometimes this comes from lawyers who are losing business to us and are envious."

The author is a writer for the Solicitors Journal

## Public interest invades the torture room

PASSION can cause bizarre behaviour. For love of Cleopatra, Mark Antony "kissed away kingdoms and provinces" and gave "his empire up to a whore". The Court of Appeal's recent judgment upholding prison sentences on sado-masochists is the latest in a long line of decisions penalising private passion.

The court, presided over by Lord Lane, the Lord Chief Justice, rejected appeals against conviction for assault and wounding by five men who were members of a sado-masochistic homosexual group. The defendants had wounded one another by genital torture, giving and receiving pain for gratification. The victims had consented. The acts were in private, in rooms equipped as torture chambers in the homes of three of the defendants.

The court accepted that no permanent injuries were inflicted, there was no infection of the wounds, there was no evidence of medical attention being sought, and there was no complaint to the police. Nevertheless, the court concluded that the conduct was criminal, and that sentences from three months to three years were appropriate. The court appreciated that the victim's consent is usually a defence to an assault charge — hence the legality of conduct from medical treatment to contact sports and the tattooing of adults. However, there must come a point at which "the public interest" intervenes. A defendant who kills somebody cannot be exonerated by the victim's consent.

The question, therefore, was whether the public interest permitted the defence of consent to apply to these acts of wounding performed for the victims' sexual pleasure. The judges concluded that "the satisfying of sado-masochistic libido does not come within the category of good reason".

This distinction between the legality of rough sports and the illegality of rough sex shows no development in judicial thinking since the 1934 decision of the Court of Criminal Appeal on a man convicted of caning a woman for sexual gratification. Rejecting the defence that the woman had consented, Mr Justice Swift said that if the caning caused more than transient or trifling hurt or injury, it could not be compared to the conduct of a participant in what was described as "manly diversions" such as wrestling.

Lord Lane's judgment indicates little appreciation of the jurisprudential issue raised by the sado-masochists' case. In 1957 the Wolfenden report on homosexual offences and prostitution explained that unless the law is to equate crime with sin, "there must remain a realm of private morality and immorality which is, in brief and crude terms, not the law's business. To say this is not to condone or encourage private immorality".

In 1959, giving the Maccabean Lecture in Jurisprudence, Lord Devlin replied that "an established morality is as necessary as good government to the welfare of society" and so "the suppression of vice is as much the law's business as the suppression of subversive activities". Lord Devlin was defeated in this intellectual debate by Professor H.L.A. Hart. He carefully explained that there is no evidence that the preservation of a society requires the enforcement of whatever its morality happens to be. Furthermore, benefits from the legal enforcement of morality have to be weighed against misery caused by the consequent infringement of human freedom. The UK subscribes to Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which answers the philosophical banning of any interference with private life unless there is a pressing social need.

This was unconvincedly dismissed as irrelevant by Lord Lane on the ground that the victims were wounded. As the wounds were temporary, and inflicted by consent in the course of the participants' private sexual life, the central question remains: why should the criminal law intervene?

Conflicts of law and morality arise in every civilised society in which the state confers autonomy on its citizens and abdicates the responsibility of deciding how they should conduct their private lives. Lord Lane's judgment is profoundly illiberal by assuming that judges should impose moral standards through the application of the "public interest".

The sado-masochists' appeal is going to the House of Lords. The appellate committee should repudiate paternalism and state that what people do in their own bedrooms, however repellent, does not concern the criminal law, if the willing victim suffers no serious or permanent injury.

The author is a practising barrister and a fellow of All Souls College, Oxford



COUNSEL

DAVID PANNICK

## Home help?

With confusion over whether legal aid is available in mortgage default proceedings, and concern over the cursory treatment by magistrates of defaulters, Philip Ely, the president of the Law Society, has called on John Major to support measures to improve the lot of mortgage defaulters in courts as well as innocent tenants made homeless when the landlord defaults.

In a letter to the Prime Minister, Mr Ely asks for leaflets about local advice agencies to be included in the court summons. Legal aid officials, he says, should be clearly told that aid is available for repossession hearings, and magistrates be more flexible in interpreting the "reasonable period" that defaulters should be given to repay arrears.

In addition, defaulters should be given more than the average two minutes a hearing so that cases can be heard properly. Mr Ely further recommends that landlords are placed under a duty to tell tenants when repossession proceedings start. Perhaps Mr Major will launch a homeowners' charter in time for the election.

### VAT victory

Faced with the usual gargantuan costs of repair and upkeep, the Friends of Winchester Cathedral organised an auction of donated and bought goods to raise money. Sadly the VAT man claimed they were legally liable to pay £6,500 of their hard-earned funds to him, arguing that the auction had in fact been a business activity.

Then Brussels came to the rescue. Grant Thornton, the Friends' business adviser, said that under recently passed European legislation the VAT man was not entitled to claim anything. Which just goes to show that the EC is not necessarily bad for British businesses, or British cathedrals, for that matter.

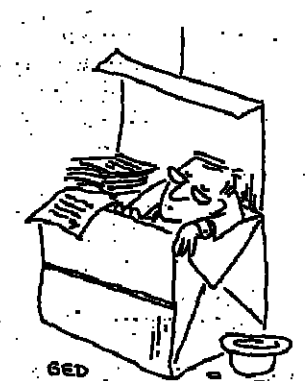
**Awards rise**  
A study by the Equal Opportunities Review of settlements in 250 race and sex discrimination cases has shown a large rise in awards for injury to feelings since 1988, when Lord Justice May issued guidelines in the Court of Appeal.

A difference has also emerged between sex and race cases. Tribunals have awarded much more in damages much more often in race discrimination cases.

However, levels of damages are still low. Only 3 per cent of awards were for £3,000 or more and most were for less than £1,000. Sexual harassment cases attracted the highest awards with an average of £1,209 over the three-year period of the study.

### Hard times

The Legal Aid Practitioners' Group evidently believes that despite the ructions over criminal legal aid, its members have some money left. It is staging its conference and AGM at the Tower Theatre



Hotel in London and secured a special nightly rate of £100 for a double room. Small change indeed for commercial lawyers but how many legal aid solicitors will be able to afford it? One hard-pressed legal aid lawyer said that if he could share the room with four others he could stump up for next

with fixed fees in the office, it would be a cardboard box on the embankment.

### Speechless

In 1981, Iqbal Begum was sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder of her husband. Three years later the Court of Appeal overturned her conviction because no one had realised throughout her trial that her interpreter did not speak her language.

The case is a dramatic illustration of the lack of satisfactory standards in legal interpreting, a lack which is now being addressed by the Nuffield Foundation's Interpreter Project. The foundation has been working for eight years with the Institute of Linguists Educational Trust to develop the certificate in community interpreting, a professional qualification for legal interpreters.

A steering committee, chaired by the foundation's director and made up of representatives from bodies such as the Crown Prosecution Service, the Commission for Racial Equality and the Law Society, has also launched a study of the use of interpreters in courts and tribunals.

### Charity group

Lord Pitt of Hampstead has agreed to be the first honorary

president of the African, Caribbean and Asian Lawyers group, the charitable group set up last November which has a formal launch this week at the Law Society.

Other patrons, including Keith Vaz, Labour MP for Leicester East, and Tony Holland, former president of the Law Society, as well as Judge Mota Singh, are expected to be there.

### Talking sense

Blueprints for reforming the legal system published last week by both the Labour party lawyers and Liberal Democrats in advance of an election call look remarkably alike in certain key respects.

Both want a Ministry of Justice, a judicial appointments commission and a shake-up of statute law. Both also deplore the leaving of Law Commission reports on the shelf to gather dust. Robert Macdennan MP, launching the Liberal Democrats' policy document, said a "major shake-up is needed in the way in which the government discharges its responsibilities for the law. The statute book is cluttered with gobbledygook."

Similarly, Lord Irvine, one of the hot tips as Lord Chancellor if Labour wins, wrote in his pamphlet for the Society of Law Lawyers: "draftsmen should be required to use plain English" — and give up the confusing legalistic style which dominates most legislation.

SCRIVENER

## OUT TOMORROW

### 1992 Edition of THE MODERN CHANCERY BAR Directory of the Chancery Bar Association

The 620-strong Chancery Bar Association is an Association of Barristers whose members specialise in property, companies, financial services, trusts, insolvency, wills, revenue, intellectual property, cases of unconscionable conduct and City fraud; and in all branches of commercial law save shipping. The new Directory has been prepared by working members of the Chancery Bar; it contains an up-to-date list of members, a detailed, indexed description of their practices, both in general and by chambers, availability for Direct Professional Access, and much other useful information. The Vice-Chancellor has welcomed the new edition, as "a convenient means by which those who seek assistance with litigation or skilled advice in the fields mentioned in this directory may see the range and strength of talent available to be called on."

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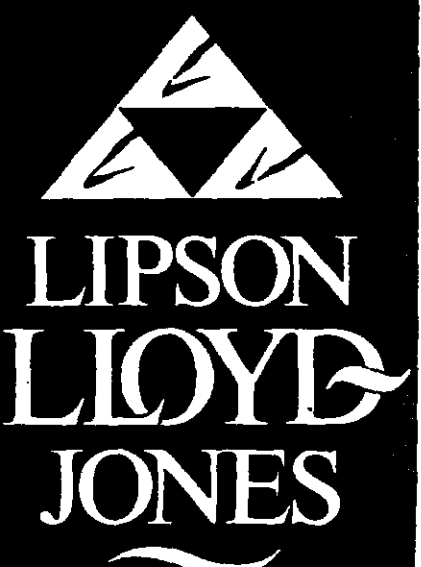
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Edward Fennell looks at the close London links forged with French and German law firms and new legal practices in the old communist bloc

# Allies on the Euro front

The ingenuity of London lawyers means there is more than one way of responding to the demands of 1992. However, the announcement by the London "top ten" firm of McKenna that it is forming a strategic alliance with Sigle, Loose, Schmidt-Diemitz and Partners in Germany and S.G. Archibold of France will certainly generate a great deal of discussion.

The alliance, which brings together leading firms from every one of the three jurisdictions, characterises one of the most popular models now being developed to deal with international legal services.

By uniting firms with established followings and reputations, this new triple alliance offers the fastest and probably the cheapest way to a pan-European law firm. Many firms would still argue that this approach cramps the choice of the local legal adviser. McKenna, however, says this is what clients now want. Stephen Whybrow, the managing partner, says a detailed marketing survey of 100 leading multinational companies showed that they now expect from their lawyers a "co-ordinated and integrated" approach to cross-border transactions, which makes use of the best local talent. The alternative models, such as joining loose "clubs" or opening one's own offices, are less attractive, Mr Whybrow says.

The alliance approach, however, does have its critics. Other leading firms, such as Clifford Chance and Freshfields, are still opening their own offices, confident that their name assures the client. Many other firms, including the medium-sized Gouldens, argue that it is still important to be able to dodge and weave through the European law scene, choosing the right overseas law practice for the job.

One crucial issue for Mr Whybrow and his new colleagues in France and Germany, however, is that time is now running out. There is a gathering pace towards exclusive relationships between the leading firms and McKenna believes that unless firms are hitched fairly soon, they could be being left on the sidelines.

Mr Whybrow says: "We thought the club idea no longer worked. To be successful, it took an enormous amount of time and effort and, in any case, it did not produce a large number of referrals. Once the alliance is in place,



the relationship is likely to be closer. Although the firms are avoiding a full commitment, so far, to unification, they foresee it as a natural development from their current position. Through the close working relationships expected to flow from regular cooperation, there should emerge a spirit that will express a sense of a fully integrated service.

The attractiveness of the partners is obvious. Archibold has one of the best names in Paris, and Sigle, Loose, Schmidt-Diemitz has

headquarters in Stuttgart and offices in Frankfurt, Berlin and Leipzig. The arrangement should make the triple alliance one of the five or ten pan-European law firms widely predicted to dominate the Continent in the next century.

In addition to the usual exchanges of staff and common training, the firms are now also starting to undertake joint marketing and presentations to European institutions and potential American clients. This marketing exercise is probably the most

important undertaking of all. The real test of these Euro strategies is whether they bring in more, high-quality business.

Mr Whybrow is confident that it will, and he can draw comfort from the experience of Jacques & Lewis, which, although much smaller, linked up with Chaintrier Caillard & Associates, of Paris, and Fiedler & Foster, of Munich, Frankfurt and Leipzig a few years ago. "Our alliance with

our French and German colleagues has filled a gap in our service," says John Northam, the senior partner at Jacques & Lewis. "I expect that in due course it will lead to a Europe-wide partnership." Part of the motivation for the Jacques & Lewis alliance was its role in attracting American clients and building credibility with American lawyers.

The alliance also allows the firms to contemplate a joint office in Brussels, which would be beyond them individually.

## Another step into the East

CLIFFORD Chance, London's largest law firm, is finalising arrangements for opening in Warsaw as part of its policy of being represented in all Europe's leading commercial centres. An official announcement is expected early next month.

The Polish development is also an important step in Clifford Chance's continuing plans in central Europe.

Meanwhile, the firm's Russian practice has received an important boost with the recruitment of the husband-and-wife team of Professor Bill Butler and Maryann Gashi-Butler.

Professor Butler, who is American by origin and is based at University College London, is widely regarded as the best informed authority on Russian law in the West. He will be a consultant to Clifford Chance.

He recently played an important role in helping Moscow to draw up its new law on pledge, which effectively sets the seal on the Yeltsin reforms of Russian commercial law. Professor Butler says that any doubts that Western business people may have had about investments in Russia may now be removed, at least from the legal dimension. Russia now has the kind of legal infrastructure that the international business community requires. Paul Melling, who runs the Baker & McKenzie practice in Moscow, acknowledges that the arrival of Professor Butler and Clifford Chance will put the firm in an entirely different position. "His level of knowledge is probably unrivalled," says Mr Melling, who himself is probably the longest resident foreign lawyer in Moscow.

Mrs Gashi-Butler, meanwhile, comes with recent experience of working for an American law firm in Moscow and knows the practicalities of dealing with Russian officials. Despite the prolonged adverse media publicity about everyday life in Russia, it seems that the international business community remains as interested as ever in the country's potential. Russia's natural resources

continue to be a powerful magnet and the hotel industry is still developing. Telecommunications is also developing fast and is attracting substantial interest from all the large Western telecommunications companies.

"All of this means that business people need a lot of legal advice to enable them to weigh up the risks of investing in Russia," Professor Butler says. "They need advice on how the system works from people on the ground who are able to ferret out information on the latest developments."

There are now 15 to 20 foreign law practices, including Scandinavian firms, in Moscow, and the foreign legal community is continuing to expand.

Mr Melling's Baker & McKenzie office, for example, has more than doubled in size since the August coup and is still suffering from a shortage of staff. Mr Melling says: "There is more work than ever before and no lack of interest from inward investors. In fact, now that it is easier than before to set up a legal entity in Russia, there is a big growth in the number of overseas subsidiaries moving in."

The fragmentation of the old Soviet Union is reshaping the way the services are provided. Lawyers now regard it as inappropriate to attempt to run transactions outside Russia from a Moscow office. As a result, Baker and McKenzie operates in the Baltic states from its Stockholm office and the firm has a presence in Kiev to handle developments in the Ukraine.

Although much of the running in Moscow is made by the foreign lawyers, Professor Butler acknowledges that the Russians will soon develop their own sophisticated legal experts. The Russians are being held back by the lack of experience in running legal services as a business but Professor Butler believes that within a decade Clifford Chance will have Russian partners. In addition, local Russian practices can also be expected to develop fast and within a few years a healthy mix of foreign and local firms handling international transactions is likely.



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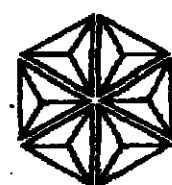
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Law Report March 10 1992

Chancery Division

# Precondition of citizen's arrest

**Regina v Self**  
Before Lord Justice Watkins, Mr Justice Swinton Thomas and Mr Justice Goff (Judgment February 25)

The powers of arrest without a warrant where an arrestable offence had been committed, pursuant to section 24(5) of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, required, as a condition precedent, an offence committed.

Where, therefore, private citizens arrested a defendant in the belief that he had stolen goods from a shop, but subsequently the defendant was acquitted of theft, the defendant's conviction of assault with intent to resist his lawful apprehension could not be sustained.

The Court of Appeal so held when allowing an appeal by Graham Colin Self against his convictions, by majority verdicts, on July 10, 1991 in Kingston upon Thames Crown Court (Judge Wakeley and a jury) of two counts of assault with intent to resist or prevent his lawful apprehension or detainment on which he was conditionally discharged for 12 months on each count, concurrent, and ordered to pay compensation of £50 each to the two people who had arrested him. He was acquitted on a count of theft.

Section 24 of the 1984 Act provides: "(5) Where an arrestable offence has been committed, any person may arrest without a warrant - (a) anyone who is guilty of the offence; (b) anyone whom he has reasonable ground for suspecting to be guilty of it."

Mr Nicholas Price, assigned by the Registrar of Criminal Ap-

peals, for the appellant, Mr Stuart Szeeman for the Crown.

MR JUSTICE GARLAND, giving the judgment of the court, said that by the count of theft it was alleged that the appellant, who at the time was a serving police officer, in October 1990 stole a bar of chocolate valued at 79p belonging to Woolworths store in Twickenham. All the offences formed part of a continuous chain of events.

The prosecution case was that a store detective saw the appellant, in plain clothes, take the bar of chocolate and walk out of the store without paying for it.

She and a part-time sales assistant followed the appellant and saw him take the chocolate from his pocket and put it under a car. She picked it up and asked the appellant to return to the store. The assistant said "You have been shoplifting" and there was a scuffle. The appellant grabbed the assistant's right arm, leaving a long scratch, punched him on the cheek and kicked him on the shin. The appellant ran off, followed by the assistant.

A man in his car saw the scuffle, left his car and asked the store detective if she needed a hand. She said "yes" so he ran after the appellant and after a struggle put the appellant's hand behind his back and said he was making a citizen's arrest as he believed he had been shoplifting. In his struggle to get away the appellant kicked the man above his knee.

In his defence the appellant said that he had picked up the chocolate bar but had forgotten about it and had no intention of stealing it. He could not explain

his actions but at the time he was not well.

One point was central to the appeal. It was submitted that since the appellant was acquitted of theft neither of the young men was entitled by virtue of section 24 of the 1984 Act to effect a citizen's arrest, so that the appellant could not be convicted of assault with intent to resist or prevent his lawful apprehension.

Both counsel had frankly informed the court that they did not address their mind to section 24, as a result of which the trial judge had not dealt with the issue so far as the jury were concerned.

In the judgment of the court the words of section 24 really did not admit argument. Subsection (5)

made it abundantly clear that the

powers of arrest without a warrant where an arrestable offence had been committed required, as a condition precedent, an offence committed. If subsequently there was an acquittal of the alleged offence, no offence had been committed.

The words of the statute were clear, and applying those words to the case there was no arrestable offence committed.

It necessarily followed that the two offences of assault, contrary to section 38 of the Offences against the Person Act 1861, could not be committed because there was no power to apprehend or detain the appellant. The convictions on those counts were quashed.

Solicitors: CFS, Kingston upon Thames.

# Flat not part of taxpayer's house

**Honour (Inspector of Taxes) v Norris**  
Before Mr Justice Vinelott (Judgment March 4)

A self-contained flat in a Kensington square used by the taxpayer together with his three other flats in the same square as part of his family accommodation did not form part of his dwelling house for the purposes of the private residence exemption from capital gains tax.

Mr Justice Vinelott so held in a reserved judgment in the Chancery Division allowing an appeal by the Crown from a determination of Kensington general commissioners that had discharged an assessment on the taxpayer, Mr W. V. Norris.

The commissioners had concluded that all the flats constituted one dwelling house which was the taxpayer's only or main residence within the meaning of section 101 of the Capital Gains Tax Act 1979.

Section 101 provides relief for "a gain accruing to an individual so far as attributable to the disposal of... a dwelling house which is, or has at any time in his period of ownership been, his only or main residence..."

Mr Nicholas Warren for the Crown; Mr Norris in person.

MR JUSTICE VINELOTT said that the appeal raised the familiar question of whether the sale of the flat was a disposal of part of a single dwelling house which was the taxpayer's residence. The question arose in unusual circumstances.

The entry which the commissioners found to be a single

dwelling house comprised four separate flats in Ovington Square, Chelsea.

In 1967 one of the flats was sold. It had been used by the taxpayer and his family to ease their accommodation shortage. The commissioners found that although self-contained and in a separate building in the square, it had been an integral part of the family's residential accommodation by providing bedrooms for the elder children, guests and, occasionally, for the taxpayer and his wife.

The commissioners had been referred to the country house cases of *Bailey v Wakefield* (1982) 55 TC 550; *Markey v Sanders* (1987) 1 WLR 864; *Williams v Merryfield* (1987) 1 WLR 1511 and *Lewis v Rook* (The Times December 6, 1989; [1990] STC 23). Since the hearing an appeal by the Crown in *Lewis v Rook* had been allowed by the Court of

Appeal (The Times February 28). Giving judgment in that case Lord Justice Balcombe, accepting that a dwelling house could consist of more than one dwelling, found the current state of the authorities to be unsatisfactory.

He went on to uphold the Crown's test: no building could form part of a dwelling house unless that building was appurtenant to and within the curtilage of the main house.

Mr Norris argued that the test for country house cases was not applicable without qualification where the question was whether two or more flats constituted a dwelling house. If, he said, a top-floor flat had a garage or storage space in the basement they would together constitute a single entity even though not within the same curtilage.

But for the instant case it was unnecessary to decide whether or

in what circumstances a flat and a garage or two flats in the same block separated by the common parts or in adjacent buildings were capable of being treated as a single dwelling house.

The taxpayer's proposition that the flat that he sold in 1967 together with his other flats elsewhere in the square formed a single entity constituting his dwelling house was an affront to common sense. The flat was a separate dwelling house that was conveniently close to provide occasional bedrooms for the children and guests.

It was no more a part of a dwelling house than, for example, would be a guest house in a nearby village bought by the owner of a country house who found that his house was not always adequate to accommodate his family and guests.

Solicitors: Solicitor of Inland Revenue.

# Riparian owner has no defence to river charge

**National Rivers Authority v Jones**

A person charged with an offence of wilfully disturbing a bed, bank or shallow on which spawning fish might have been, contrary to section 2(4) of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975, was not entitled to raise a defence that he was a riparian owner with the right to cross the river either on foot or by any other means.

The Queen's Bench Divisional

Court (Lord Justice Beldam and Mr Justice Tudor Evans) so held on March 2 when they allowed the appeal of the National Rivers Authority against the dismissal by Llanidloes Justices on June 14, 1990, of two informations charging the respondent, John L. Jones, with offences against section 2(4) of the 1975 Act.

MR JUSTICE TUDOR EVANS said that section 2(4) created two offences, wilful disturbance of

any spawn or spawning fish and wilful disturbance of any bank, bed or shallow on which spawn or spawning fish might be and "wilfully" was simply an intention to disturb. The findings of fact clearly showed the respondent had that intention.

The only defences available arose either in subsection (5) or from the exception that the person had the legal right to take materials from the particular waters in question.

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Constructive career: Samantha Hitchins learns skills on site

While the construction industry is being battered by recession, its company directors are cultivating a professional image improved by higher education, quality assurance and coordination between branches of the building business.

Construction is not considered as glamorous as architecture. The industry literature, however, has banished the brawn and muddy boots cartoon image in favour of shiny hard hats and precision instruments. Brochures also show women managers on site, although they are still rare creatures.

Samantha Hitchins, aged 25, is one of the new generation of female careerists and is Wilshire's assistant site manager on a multi-million-pound project in Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire. "I wanted to do something different," Ms Hitchins explains.

Having obtained her higher national certificate in building, she is completing Chartered Institute of Building qualifications, but her basic skills have come from experience.

"I have been shown how to lay bricks and I have watched all the trades on site," she says.

She wears hard hat, trousers and boots and works on site from pre-dawn to post-dusk in all weathers, with a workforce of up to 150. "The men know I can make decisions," she says. "There is a lot of camaraderie. I love the atmosphere." She expects eventually to work abroad. "But it is difficult

## Why construction companies are pioneering new degree courses.

Ann Hills reports

for women in the Middle East," she says. Her ambition? "Higher management in site work."

Miss Hitchins's aim is being helped by an emphasis on management, which is the theme of four pioneering BSc courses — commercial management and quantity surveying at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (Umis) and at Loughborough University of Technology, which also has a BSc in construction engineering management. The fourth course is a BSc in construction management at Salford University, headed by Chris March, whose career began with John Laing Construction in 1963.

The Salford course started in October 1988 in partnership with ten construction companies, including Bovis, Laing, Wimpey and Taylor Woodrow. Mr March, aiming to turn out well-rounded managers, sends second-year students to the John Ridgway School of Adventure in Sutherland for one-week outdoor leadership courses.

Although Salford graduates are virtually guaranteed employment

with their sponsors, some of the first batch are having difficulty in finding the breadth of experience needed to capitalise on their academic training.

Iain Roden, the head of training and management development at Bovis, admits that recruits are being stuck for longer than desired in some positions because of work shortages. "But that does not mean we can afford to ignore the future," he says.

This month, Bovis has acknowledged this with the introduction of an in-house master's degree, pioneered with Brighton Polytechnic. Its 35 students graduated from first degrees in subjects such as construction management, quantity surveying, civil engineering and building services engineering. So far, only two of the 35 are women, but Mr Roden hopes this will change as the profession of construction management becomes better known.

The course is based on project work and a series of modules spread over two years. This leads to a postgraduate diploma, and opens the door to the dissertation stage, which should take about a year and result in an MSc in construction management.

Mr Roden says: "This MSc represents a significant investment, but it is about the future of our industry and Bovis's position at the forefront of it."

Information on professional bodies is available from the Construction Industry Council, 26 Store Street, London WC1E 7BT (071 637 8692)

## DEGREES BY PRIVATE SPONSOR

ALTHOUGH the recession has resulted in cuts in the number of sponsored places through the construction industry, leading companies, such as Bovis, which specialises in managing contracts, are safeguarding training, Ann Hills writes.

The John Laing group is sponsoring about 150 undergraduates through 30 universities and polytechnics. Elspeth Swain, Laing's group management development manager, says: "This figure is higher than in the past because three or four years ago we decided to make more use of sponsorship as an alternative to final-year milk-round recruitment."

Laing's big projects at present include the second Severn River crossing and the British Library. Even during the economic downturn, the management is still maintaining a steady inflow of recruits.

Balfour Beatty admits that its graduate intake is down, but even this year the group will be looking for between 60 and 80 graduates from specialist degree courses who are ready for the next stage in their professional training as civil engineers, quantity surveyors and builders.

Costain, with about 7,000

UK staff, gives a similar figure — about 60 graduates recruited in the past 12 months, fewer than usual, and expects to continue recruitment at this lower level.

In the West End of London, Willmott Dixon is building an extension to the Institute of Education.

Tim Carpenter and Tony Organ, the deputy director of Willmott Dixon Symes, one of the group's operating companies, are both managers who have achieved professional status by examination entry to the Chartered Institute of Building.

Mr Carpenter, the assistant to the chairman, began his career as a trainee site manager and is now completing a part-time MSc in building economics and management at University College London.

Continuing education is part of the company's ethos, and this was recently acknowledged when Willmott Dixon Eastern received an employment department Investors in People Award for its training programme.

Mr Carpenter says: "We were the first building company to receive help. This company typically sees information technology as one of the ways forward."

071-481 1066

## PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS

071-782 7826

### The Luton & Dunstable Hospital Trust (Shadow)

In preparation for Trust status from 1st April 1992, the hospital's finance function is being strengthened and a challenging opportunity has arisen.

## Financial Controller

c £22-£24k

We are looking for someone to set up and manage the financial accounting function and in particular to prepare annual accounts, develop and maintain control of financial systems as well as taking responsibility for income collection and treasury management. The successful candidate should preferably be CCAB qualified, have excellent interpersonal and staff management skills and a proven track record for financial management and accounting.

For an information pack please contact Mrs Pat Craddock, Recruitment Manager, Luton & Dunstable Hospital, Lewsey Road, Luton, Beds LU4 0DZ. Telephone 0582 491122, ext 2172/2248 (or 24 hour answering service on 493710).

Closing date for applications 24th March 1992.

Working towards equal opportunities.



## LEGAL APPOINTMENTS

### THE LONDON OFFICE OF WANSBROUGHS WILLEY HARGRAVE

has a vacancy for a Senior Commercial Lawyer with experience of insurance and financial services. The firm offers a range of commercial and litigation services to insurance companies and seeks to respond to the corporate requirements of these organisations in the light of growing opportunities presented by the single market. The appointment is required to service current demands and to develop existing connections. Salary is negotiable. Please send CV in confidence to: Head of Location, Wansbroughs Willey Hargrave, Drury House, Russell Street, London WC2B 5HA



LONDON LEEDS BIRMINGHAM BRISTOL



## COMMERCIAL LITIGATION

Stewart's is a young and energetic Lincoln's Inn Fields practice. Its expanding litigation department has a positive and innovative approach to its clients' problems and now requires a solicitor with two to three years post-qualification experience. The applicant will join a team concentrating on commercial litigation with an emphasis on professional negligence. Candidates must have good academic qualifications, experience during articles with a substantial London or Provincial firm and an instinct for practice development. A competitive salary and good career prospects are offered for the right candidate willing to work hard with us to provide a quality service.

If you are interested, please contact Colum Leonard or John Cahill on 071 242 6462 or write to us at 63 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, WC2A 3LW. All approaches will be treated in strict confidence.

## TAKING YOUR PLACE IN TOWER HAMLETS

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

## PROJECT MANAGER

£21,465-£24,825 Ref: 456/36010967

The development of effective information systems is essential to Tower Hamlets' commitment to quality of service. A manager is required for the recently established Development Team to provide bespoke IT solutions essential to the organisation achieving its business goals.

The Council has created a system of Neighbourhood Management where Customer Care is emphasized. The working environment is dynamic and demands considerable personal commitment. Priorities change continually and flexibility is the keynote in the way the department works.

The successful candidate must have experience of managing the development of quality software projects within agreed timescales. A programming background is required within the fourth generation language, Powerhouse. Knowledge of the AS/400 platform would be an added advantage.

For an informal discussion please ring Anne Surtees on 081 980 4831 ext. 5095. For an application form and application pack please call our 24 hour personalised recruitment line on 081-812 0880.

Please quote job reference. Completed forms must be returned by 20 March 1992.

## Tower Hamlets

Tower Hamlets has transformed local Government by decentralising service delivery and accountability to seven Neighbourhoods.

What Tower Hamlets is achieving today others will attempt tomorrow. The commitment, energy, drive and innovation of staff are essential to our success.

Tower Hamlets is committed to effective implementation of its Equal Opportunities Policy. Applications are considered on the basis of their suitability for the post regardless of sex, sexual orientation, religion, racial origin, marital status, disability or age.

All jobs are open to jobholders unless otherwise stated. The Council's recruitment and retention package could mean subsidised car leasing, a relocation package worth up to £5000, including loan facilities, free life insurance, subsidised mortgage and travel allowance.



## THE SCOUT ASSOCIATION



## DIRECTOR FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

This is a senior executive post within the Scout Movement, which has a voluntary Membership of over half a million young people in the United Kingdom. The holder is to head a newly reshaped Community Development and will have a direct responsibility for supporting the development of Scouting within all parts of the community.

He/she will lead and manage a team of staff working in London and in the field. Additionally, he/she will have a responsibility for supporting the development, together with other voluntary bodies, of new initiatives designed to extend the range and scope of Scouting, with young people who may not be members of The Scout Association. The present holder retires in the autumn of 1992 and a successor is now sought.

Candidates, ideally within the age range 35-50 years, must have a commitment to the ideals of the Scout Movement and a proven management ability. A current working knowledge of the Scout Movement is a desirable requirement, but not essential. Those with other relevant experience are encouraged to apply. The holder of the post will be expected to live within commuting distance of the Association's Headquarters in South Kensington and there is a significant travel commitment in the job itself.

This is a full-time appointment for which the salary package as a whole will not be worth less than £30,000. Benefits include car, contributory pension scheme and 30 days holiday.

Application forms and further particulars are obtainable from the Chief Executive Commissioner, The Scout Association, Baden-Powell House, Queen's Gate, LONDON SW7 5JS, and should be returned by March 31, 1992.

## FIELD DIRECTOR BELIZE

VSO has over 1400 skilled men and women sharing their skills with local communities in nearly 60 countries of the developing world. VSO has 30 volunteers working in Belize mainly in technical/vocational education, formal education and health.

The Field Director, who is supported by 2 administrative staff in our Belizean office, acts as VSO's representative in Belize. S/he is responsible for the development of the programme and for providing personal and professional support to serving volunteers.

We are looking for somebody who can offer excellent staff management, budgetary and administrative skills, preferably gained in the public or voluntary sector, plus an understanding of development issues. Good communication and interpersonal skills are also essential. Experience of working overseas and a knowledge of volunteering would be an advantage.

This post is offered on a four year (2 x 2 years) fixed term contract with tax free salary, accommodation and other benefits.

Although handover in Belize will not take place until July/August, you will need to be available for three weeks from 1st June for briefing in London.

THIS IS RE-ADVERTISING. PREVIOUS APPLICANTS NEED NOT RE-APPLY. The closing date for the receipt of written applications is Friday 27th March with interviews being held on 8 April 1992.

For further details and an application form please contact:

VSO Personnel Department, 317 Parkway Bridge Road, London SW15 2RN. Tel: 071 726 1342 (24 hrs)

## NORTH WEST ARTS BOARD

## SENIOR ARTS PLANNING OFFICER

£18,375 - £22,278

NWAB, the arts development organisation for the north west, seeks to appoint an experienced arts manager with good knowledge of local authority structures to this senior post, leading a small team responsible for local authority liaison and issue-based arts development within the Arts Planning Division. The post demands an ability to negotiate, develop partnerships and networks with local authorities, voluntary and private sectors, and also knowledge of the arts in urban regeneration and tourism.

Closing date Monday 30 March 1992

For an informal discussion contact: Dr Linda Moss, Director of Arts Planning and Information at NWAB on 061-228 3062. Application forms and further details available from: Executive Assistant, Arts Planning and Information, NWAB, 12 Harter Street, Manchester M1 6T7 or telephone 061-228 3062.

## MAROONDAH HOSPITAL P.O. Box 135, East Ringwood, 3135 Victoria AUSTRALIA

## DIRECTOR, CRITICAL CARE UNIT

(Anaesthetic work optional)

MaroonDAH Hospital invites applications from Physicians and Anaesthetists who have intensive care experience. Specialists with anaesthetic qualifications may opt to spend part of the above full-time position as an Anaesthetist, in which case a very attractive financial package may be negotiated.

The recently commissioned, well equipped Critical Care Unit has approval for nine beds including three intensive care, four coronary care and two step down. There is 24 hour dedicated Registrar cover.

This acute public hospital of 218 beds serving the Outer Eastern suburbs of Melbourne has an active Emergency Department, three operating theatres and most specialist in out patient services (including psychiatry) which are well supported by investigative services such as C.T. scanning and Nuclear Medicine. The Hospital continues to advance at a rapid rate and several new services are planned.

## HOSPITAL MEDICAL OFFICERS

Two positions involving Critical Care and Emergency Medicine will be available, commencing 4th May, 1992. Terms tailored to suit individual applicants.

Further enquiries are welcomed by Medical Administration on (013) 817 3538. Reverses charges acceptable. As U.K. graduates will not have valid Australian registration in Australia from July, 1992, they are encouraged to apply promptly.







